

The Listener

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Polar supply ship approaching the coast of Antarctica (see page 299)

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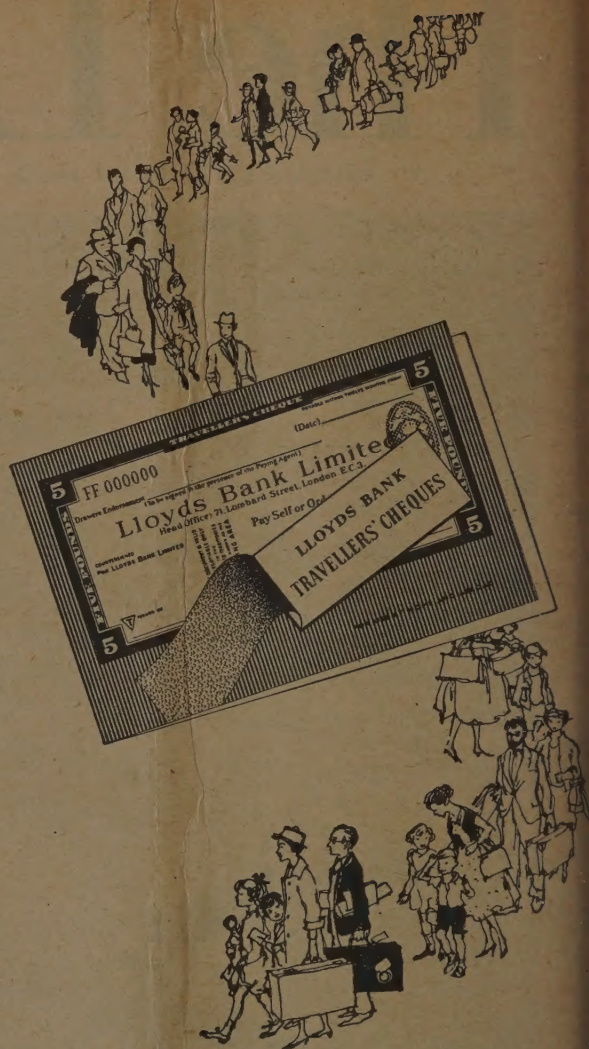
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AS A NEWSPAPER

It is as a by-product of this effort that I note the importance attached to simple enjoyment in reading. Thus, apart from the production of books and plays which have intellectual or social relevance to local problems—Shaw and Sartre, for example, are perennially popular—a good many translations of western novels are being done at present; and the circulation of these is by no means confined to an intimate political circle or, for that matter, to politically 'correct' books. In Poland, for instance, a certain number of popular best-sellers from Britain and France—Agatha Christie and Simenon are examples—are being translated simply because they are best-sellers. And even with

works of more serious literary merit, the emphasis is on straightforward story-telling rather than intellectual or emotional abstractions. I should be surprised, for example, if even the Poles decide yet awhile to translate the exquisite nuances of Miss Compton-Burnett; but Hemingway, Waugh and Françoise Sagan are all translated and have all been recently serialised in popular magazines. An official of one of the state publishing houses emphasised to me shrewdly the importance of bringing home to people that the written word, in a civilised society, is a source of *fun*.

Does the state encourage this cult of the West? In Poland, a sort of latter-day renaissance has made a good deal of progress, and the intellectual *élite* has more or less successfully broken loose from the party bureaucracy. The Government tolerates the situation; indeed, there are signs that it even welcomes the 'intellectual revolution' as an instrument for helping to put across the new party line of democratisation and decentralisation. In Hungary and Czechoslovakia the process has not gone nearly so far. Freedom to criticise has been formally established by the Twentieth Congress; and the writers and journalists, many of whom have fiercely resented the constrictions of Zhdanovite discipline, are beginning to make their protests felt. But in both these countries, the party still has the situation under control, and the revolt against the dogmas of socialist realism has not yet achieved anything like the momentum or coherence it has in Poland.

Intellectuals and Scribblers

Even in Poland there is still a struggle. As recently as last April a bitter attack was launched on 'intellectuals and scribblers who hate our system' by General Witaszewski, who is one of the chief party men in the army, and generally thought to be a mouthpiece for the most rigidly Muscovite group in the Central Committee. This outburst was directed especially against Antony Slonimsky, a liberal and fervently Anglophil poet, who has played a prominent and courageous role in the Thaw. The incident, which evoked a storm of protests in the press and among intellectuals generally, ended with a personal apology to Mr. Slonimsky by senior party officials. It was followed a few weeks later by a public affirmation of confidence in the press and the intellectuals by the Prime Minister, who in this matter was clearly speaking for the majority, and more liberal, group in the leadership.

This keen desire for contact with the West in literary and artistic matters seems to me to be of paramount importance, both because it is directly concerned with intellectual freedom, and because it is having to be struggled for, and is in no sense a docile response to a coexistence directive. Outside this field, the attitude to the West seems more conventional, being based on, first, curiosity and, secondly, emulation. These both reflect a sense of relief that the Cold War has been called off and the Iron Curtain dismantled. But there is an overtone which should not be ignored. It is the mistrust of official propaganda. One constantly hears stories from Russia of fantastic misconceptions which exist about life in the West. Not so—or not to anything like the same extent—in the countries I am speaking of, where the link has never been entirely broken. There is generally a fair background of knowledge and a desire to check facts against official propaganda, especially in matters which are relevant to local experience. As to emulation, it is often enough a simple matter of chauvinism or national pride: sport, or the infinitely wearisome figures of coal and steel production which are always flung at the western visitor, provide the most obvious examples of this. But, again, there is the desire to find some stable and high standard of comparison against which official propaganda can be tested. 'We're making progress rapidly now', a Pole observed after asking me a long series of questions about British social security administration, 'but it's hard to say how fast. You've done things like this efficiently for so long—that's why we need to compare'. 'What about comparing with Russia', I asked; 'their experiences might be more valid in your circumstances?' 'Asian standards would not satisfy our people', I was told primly, and rather nastily.

So the West is widely seen as the symbol of high standards and liberal customs. Western influences are being consciously used by those who are seeking to liberalise (as we should say—they prefer 'democratise') the regimes. But liberalisation in this sense does not mean a move towards parliamentary democracy—still less a drive against communism. The general idea of the more liberal elements which are, I think, in power in Poland, and which are beginning to emerge in Hungary and Czechoslovakia, is a collective society, based on one-party democracy but not dependent for its economic impetus on police

sanctions, and not tied hand and foot to Moscow. It is, incidentally, surprising how few people are thinking of moving towards a more genuine democracy by way of our two-party system. Even among the most progressive communists there seems a general acceptance of the marxist doctrine that, in a society where economic power is secure in the hands of the working class, there is no function for an organised second party—except a counter-revolutionary one, which is not permissible.

A More Liberal Communism

How far this notion of a more liberal and less monolithic communism dependent on its own economic incentives and not on a terror, can the long run succeed in states where power is so much concentrated? I do not want to discuss at length. But it is clear that at this moment conditions exist in the Peoples' Democracies which make some progress in this direction possible. And those who are working for it are, by and large, the same group as are fostering contact with the West. And their purpose in fostering contact is partly to create a magnetic field as it were, at the opposite pole to the Soviet Union, and partly to liberate individual minds as quickly as possible from the dark age of Stalin and Zhdanov—even at the cost of pandering to some extent what even they still consider bourgeois weaknesses.

I have said that the conditions exist in which some progress can be made towards liberalisation and independence. What are they? In the first place, a removal of the threat of war and a cutting back of the powers of the Soviet-controlled secret police. Until fairly recently the M.V.D. in Moscow has had overriding powers, which the communist parties in the satellite countries could do little to check. The two conditions now exist as a result of changes in Soviet policy since the death of Stalin. But almost equally important, if liberalisation is to be more than just a form of words, is the need to raise consumption standards to a level at which economic incentives can begin to operate in the place of police compulsion. At the same time, it is necessary to re-train individual minds to accept the disciplines and responsibilities of democracy, which need not, of course, be according to our *patte*. The former of these two objectives must depend, to a great extent, on the Soviet Union. The Russians, by judicious use of their gold reserves or by modifying onerous trade agreements, could transform life in the Peoples' Democracies in a very short time. But material living standards do depend partly on us as well.

The so-called strategic embargo (which covers a very much wider range of goods than just the munitions of war) causes resentment and puzzlement among those who otherwise wish us well. I do not believe it has any decisive effect now—if it ever did—on military or economic potential. Alternative sources have been developed. But, as one Polish economist put it to me: 'It makes everything a little more difficult and costly for us'. So the effect of the embargo is to hinder the rise in consumption standards; and that is bound to set back the process of liberalisation and increase dependence on Russia: not, one would have thought, a very far-sighted policy for the West.

How the West Can Help

The re-training of minds to accept the responsibilities of democracy is an objective in which we can help a great deal. For contact with western standards is likely of itself to nourish exactly those elements in the individual and in society out of which democracy and independence may grow. Are we then making such contact readily available? No, the least. It is still much easier, for instance, for English people of all kinds of opinions to get visas to enter eastern Europe than for western communists to come to England. Then, again, the close view that any citizen in a People's Democracy gets of Britain is through the eyes of our embassies. I am sure our Ambassadors have been efficient in observing the Cold War brief they have hitherto had to work on. But this brief is no longer adequate; and I have come to the conclusion that a few of our diplomats in eastern Europe have any contact at all with anybody who matters. Such contact has not always been easy to make, but the result is that their influence is less than it might be, and too often they derive their information from sources equally out of touch with events. Thus ignorance and prejudice feed on one another, and too much of our propaganda is based on a total and uncompromising hostility to the system. At best, that is too negative an approach to be effective as propaganda; and, in fact, the failure to recognise the points in a system which has certainly come to stay does much to discredit our legitimate criticisms.

Some people take the view that the new look in the communist world

is entirely dictated by the Kremlin and is based on the purely Russian appreciation that, only when the pressures of war economics are removed, can communism effectively challenge the West. Those people may be tempted to say to the Russians: 'To the devil with you. We have shown that we can endure the Cold War better than you can, and we prefer to meet your challenge on ground of our own choosing'. I hope that is not the official view—and not only because of the risks attached to it. As far as the Peoples' Democracies are concerned, I am sure it is based on wrong assumptions. There is a strong impatience with Russian control among party members in all the countries I visited; and I am pretty sure that the trend, following the rehabilitation of President Tito, is for a much more national style of communism. And, since those who are working hardest to democratise and decentralise the regimes are the people who are also working hardest to foster contact with the West, liberalisation and breaking away from the Kremlin may be part of the same process. Surely it will be wise for us in the West to collaborate (as I suppose the Indians, for instance, are already doing)

in working for a world in which a communist, or near-communist, country need not be a complete satellite of Russia? But collaboration of this kind must include, apart from a purely political *détente*, the establishment of commercial relations, which can relieve the Peoples' Democracies from their complete economic dependence on the Soviet Union; and cultural relations, which can prevent individuals from drifting back into the dogmatic prison house of the last ten years.

The alternative to such collaboration can only be the perpetuation of a monolithic Soviet empire and a gradual relapse into Cold War, which (short of war itself) is the political expression of the Iron Curtain. Put like that, the choice seems obvious. Yet, at present, the drive for better relations is coming mainly from their side. Our response is seldom more than cool, sometimes positively forbidding. Is that good sense? Is it not about time we took stock of the new situation? Had we not, in fact, better reconsider some of the attitudes we took up in the Cold War, which are rapidly becoming undignified and perhaps a little dangerous?—*Third Programme*

President Eisenhower, the 'Beloved Institution'

By CHRISTOPHER SERPELL, B.B.C. correspondent

THE Republicans have trooped away from San Francisco hoarse but happy after an orgy of conformism. Unanimity was perhaps appropriate to the religious devotion which they expressed for the figure of President Eisenhower. But it was also required of them to strengthen the re-nomination of Vice-President Nixon and most of them gave it willingly, either because they felt that in him lay the hopes of the party's right wing or out of sheer anxiety not to be different. Only two non-conformists dared to raise their voices even against this secondary figure. One of them, Mr. Harold Stassen, subsequently recanted and by way of penance was allowed to second, in the most abject terms, the renomination of the man whom he had previously described as 'mostly likely to harm the Eisenhower ticket'. The other, a courageous eccentric from the State of Nebraska, wanted to offer the name of a hypothetical Joe Smith as a symbolical alternative to that of Richard Nixon and as token of free choice. But he was treated like a moral leper by his fellow delegates and hustled from the hall as a frivolous interrupter of the proceedings.

So the organisers of those proceedings, who had declared beforehand that the Convention would go like clockwork, had their way. The only consideration that might cloud their satisfaction was the fact that the vast television audience had found the spectacle almost nauseatingly dull. The talented artists recruited to provide entertainment had been unable to offset the oily flow of extravagant eulogy and the inane violence of the so-called spontaneous demonstrations staged by young Republicans who had been hired for the purpose. All this caused the radio and television networks to withdraw much of their staff before the Convention finished. It remained for President Eisenhower to give the proceedings some point and some dignity by his speech of acceptance on the last day, a well-written and well-delivered address which did recognise larger issues. In the course of it he said:

'The strength of the free world lies not in cementing the free world into a second monolithic mass to compete with that of the communists. It lies rather in the unity that comes of the voluntary associa-

tion of nations which, however diverse, are developing their own capacities and asserting their own national destinies in a world of freedom and of mutual respect. There can be no enduring peace for any nation while other nations suffer privation, oppression, and a sense of injustice and despair. In our modern world it is madness to suppose that there could be an island of tranquillity and prosperity in a sea of wretchedness and frustration. For America's sake, as well as the world's, we must measure up to the challenge of the second imperative, the urgent need for mutual economic and military co-operation among the free nations, sufficient to deter or repel aggression wherever it may threaten.

But even this is no longer enough. We are in the era of the thermo-nuclear bomb that can obliterate cities and can be delivered across continents. With such weapons war has become not just tragic but preposterous. With such weapons there can be no victory for anyone. Plainly, the objective now must be to see that such a war does not occur at all. And so the third imperative of peace is this: without for a moment relaxing our internal and collective defences, we must actively try to bridge the great chasm that separates us from the peoples under communist rule'.

As President Eisenhower addressed the delegates to the convention he gave them a reassuring view of a vigorous and commanding figure who had apparently completely regained his health. Thus he offered them the best guarantee of their victory in November. It is true the President himself admitted another ingredient essential for that victory—the support of what he called 'discerning Democrats and independents'. Those who predict a Democratic victory even against President Eisenhower's leadership claim that the Republicans will lose the independent voter in 1956. He will not have been reassured, say these forecasters, by his view of the proceedings in San Francisco, where independence of thought was regarded as heresy, and he is likely to be further alienated by the figure of Mr. Nixon ready to succeed to the White House if Mr. Eisenhower should die during his second term.



President Eisenhower and Mr. Nixon acknowledging the cheers of their supporters at the Republican Convention in San Francisco

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All this may be true but it is cold comfort. It ignores the fact that President Eisenhower has, to a large extent, succeeded in presenting himself to the nation as a beloved institution above political considerations—almost on the level of a constitutional monarch. The crowds who lined the streets of San Francisco during the chilly evening hours of last Tuesday were certainly not all Republicans, and yet the look on those people's faces as they watched the President drive by was the look I have seen in a British crowd as the Queen was passing. Democrats may argue that this is a terrible mistake, that

Mr. Eisenhower is under the influence of his Republican advisers and circumscribed by the ideas of the party he has adopted. Yet it is obvious that Republican politicians believe they can win by clinging to the coat-tails of a man who is not thought of as a politician by the public. Only two thoughts can shake the confidence of these politicians: one is the possibility that the President's health may fail again before November; the other is that the voters who re-elect Mr. Eisenhower may also re-elect a Democratic majority in Congress.

—'At Home and Abroad' (Home Service)

Aspects of Africa

White South Africans

By JULIUS LEWIN

IT is rather difficult to talk about 'White South Africans'. How do you recognise one when you meet him? I think we can be distinguished, especially when abroad, not only by our accents, but in other things—and most of all by our tendency to defend our country against criticism of its colour policies. This tendency exists even among those South Africans who feel, as I do, very critical of the Union Government and, indeed, of the attitude of most of my fellow white South Africans towards racial questions.

Two European Groups

People in Britain are often surprised to find that even a South African who himself has a liberal outlook dislikes ill-informed or disproportionate criticism of the Union. One reason why we resent undue criticism—but not, of course, all criticism—may be this: that there is still in the Union a good deal of public criticism of prevailing policies, careful criticism made by South Africans who know their own country. When we critics within South Africa express our opinions, we do so in the face of popular pressures; and we have to take care to avoid an insidious holier-than-thou attitude towards our own fellow-countrymen. So, in common with all white South Africans, we naturally dislike such a holier-than-thou attitude when it appears in Britain. There is another reason why it is difficult to speak with detachment about white South Africans. There are two European groups of different origin in the Union, and no serious studies have been made of either the English-speaking or the Afrikaans group. We have no books about the white people to compare in quality with the large number of studies that have been made of the black people.

This lack of knowledge is understandable enough, however regrettable, in the case of the English-speaking South Africans. By and large the English-speaking world assumes that it knows itself, and in the Dominions variations are usually regarded as matter for pleasant conversation rather than academic study. But the Afrikaners might well be called the unknown nationality of the contemporary world, though certainly not from lack of interest in their affairs. There are today nearly 2,000,000 Afrikaners in the Union of South Africa and they are unquestionably the dominant race. Every prime minister since the Union was formed in 1910 has been an Afrikaner. The present Cabinet consists exclusively of Afrikaners, who also number over 80 per cent. of the Members of Parliament. The civil service, from top to bottom, is manned almost exclusively by Afrikaners and so are the police force and the defence forces. The triumph of Afrikaner nationalism at the polls in 1948 was fully confirmed in 1953, and since then it has been clear to every realist that political power now rests securely in the hands of the Afrikaners.

Yet there is not a single book in the English language devoted to a description, let alone an analysis, of these people; and I do not suppose there is one in any other language except Afrikaans itself, a language few people read outside southern Africa. The Afrikaners are a lonely and so an uneasy people who feel themselves to be much misunderstood. They are not really misunderstood but nor are they well understood.

This lack of objective study is all the more extraordinary because the making of the Afrikaner mind presents the sociologist with a fascinating subject. Professor de Kiewiet, himself an expatriate South African now in the United States, has made clear that one of the main factors moulding the Afrikaner outlook has been the frontier tradition. Perhaps

he chose this elucidation because of his experience in the United States where the concept has had considerable influence on historical writing. But in any case it is clear enough that the historic great trek of the Afrikaners into the interior of South Africa isolated them from the major influences of the nineteenth century. The Afrikaner character was in fact formed in the eighteenth century. 'Isolation', writes Professor de Kiewiet, 'sank into their character. . . . Their power of endurance could lead them to resist all innovation and to be suspicious of the foreigner and contemptuous of their inferiors. For education the trekker read their Bibles intensively, drawing from the Old Testament, which spoke the authentic language of their lives, a justification of themselves of their beliefs, and their habits'.

I think Professor de Kiewiet is right. What has also a great effect on the Afrikaner outlook is the fact that life on the frontier was lived in continual conflict with the African tribes. On and off, this struggle between the trekking and the tribesmen lasted for the better part of the nineteenth century. It finally decided that most of the lands were to be occupied not by the native tribes but by the Afrikaner farmers. And as usual in the process of colonisation, the farmers then took steps to ensure for themselves a regular supply of cheap labour.

These, then, were the economic and social conditions in which the Afrikaner attitude to Africans was bred. What is not often appreciated is that a similar attitude was adopted by English-speaking colonists of British origin in both the eastern Cape Colony and in Natal, under comparable circumstances. This fact underlies the basic similarity between the Afrikaner and the English attitudes to white supremacy.

The Afrikaner people since these early formative days have undergone a great change. The difficulties of small-scale agriculture long ago began to drive them off the land and into the cities. That process was accelerated by the industrial revolution which has gripped South Africa for the past twenty years. Manufacturing industries and commerce are now the biggest single source of the national income, having outstripped both mining and farming. In response to this change, the Afrikaner has in the last generation made a new 'great trek', this time to the towns to earn his livelihood in industrial employment.

In his talk in this series giving the Afrikaner point of view Professor Samuel Pauw* spoke of the tremendous change which this brought to the Afrikaner way of life. He pointed out some of the difficulties of adjustment from rural to urban life, particularly in view of the fact that, in spite of increasing Afrikaner effort, and in spite of Afrikaner political ascendancy, economic power still rests predominantly with the English-speaking group. But he believes that the division between the two peoples is gradually and surely closing, primarily because the Afrikaner earning power in the cities is inevitably rising and will continue to do so.

A Continual Struggle

Professor Pauw is perhaps unduly confident; ultimate cohesion is not a simple matter of the economic rise and urbanisation of the Afrikaner. In the first place that rise has not been, to the Afrikaner himself, a steady and satisfying process; it has been a continual struggle to preserve and assert his self-esteem, as well as to increase his income and in the process it is possible that a certain bitterness and defiance have become ingrained. For this was no ordinary migration to the cities. It is as if the industrial revolution in England had brought to the

cities not the workers on the land, but the sons of the landed gentry themselves to work for wages in the factories and shops owned and run by people of another nationality. Secondly, Afrikaner emergence into commercial life is not necessarily welcomed by the English community, but is often seen as competition, and indeed as a potential threat to its own prosperity.

It should also be realised that whatever the extent of his economic rise and integration, many factors keep the Afrikaner determined to remain one of a people apart and conscious above all else of his Afrikaner nationality. He has been taught, in separate schools attended only by Afrikaner children, a version of South African history that makes the African his first enemy and the British his second. All the daily newspapers published in his own language are closely controlled by one political party, the one that now forms the Government. And nearly all the literature produced in Afrikaans comes from a few publishers who also have close ties with the ruling party. In these circumstances the Afrikaner remains attached to old ideas; he cannot readily make the profound personal and social adjustment that he needs to make for a smoother transition from the world of the eighteenth century to the present and the future.

The Afrikaners will continue to dominate the Union politically for the foreseeable future. One major reason is the fact that their birth-rate is considerably higher than that of the English-speaking section. Another reason is their reluctance to encourage immigrants to come in large numbers from Europe. It is therefore plain that nearly 1,000,000 white South Africans of British descent are a minority and are destined to remain a permanent minority. Their loss of political power is likely to be a permanent loss. They are today the only English minority in the world that lacks all semblance of political power.

No English Ardour for Politics

They are, however, adjusting themselves to this new situation with the aid of two main consolations. The one is the accumulation of wealth, and the other is the game of golf. Today it is difficult to persuade suitable English-speaking candidates to stand for Parliament, even in the safest seats left to the Opposition. This fact surprises anyone who has assumed that the English in South Africa retain all the political traditions familiar in Britain. For in fact they do not. The English have in the past undoubtedly made contributions of high value to the political life and the economic growth of the country. This is sufficiently shown by the structure of the Union Parliament, by the Supreme Court, by the legal and other professions, and by the whole framework of public administration and modern trade and industry that has made the Union the strongest and most efficient state in the continent of Africa. None the less, what the English have not done must also be mentioned because their weakness is a part of the present situation. The English have failed to maintain any ardour for politics, or to keep alive any fire to match the burning nationalism of the Afrikaners. They have even failed to defend the historic civil liberties one would regard as a vital element in the British heritage.

In all important questions of colour policy, the English are today content to leave the initiative in Afrikaner hands. They hardly put forward a real alternative policy to that of racial separation. They are, however, inclined to deplore the pursuit of political or social theory when it threatens to reach the point of affecting material welfare. The English, concentrating on economic enterprise and its handsome rewards, accept the fact that an increasing, not a diminishing, number of Africans are employed in urban areas. With only one or two exceptions, every big town is the home of a larger number of black or brown people than of white. There is accordingly no sign that the process of economic integration will really be stopped by law, let alone that the reverse process of disintegration will be set in motion. The English do not regret the fact that economic forces have hitherto proved stronger than political ideas and legal restrictions, but many wonder if this tendency will continue. Everyone knows that sometimes in human history ideas have possessed men to such an astonishing degree that they have sacrificed material welfare in their obsession with an idea; and many wonder whether this may not be the case with the idea of *apartheid*.

The English concentration on economic rather than political life helps to explain the decline of the relatively liberal tradition that was established in the British Cape Colony and remained there until Union. That tradition was based on the maxim of 'equal rights for all civilised men' regardless of race or colour. For nearly a century the old Cape Colony respected that principle, admitting both Africans and Coloured men (that is, men of mixed descent) to the common franchise on the

same terms as white men. That law prevailed in the Cape Province until exactly twenty years ago. The Cape liberal tradition never died out completely; and in recent years a small group of English-speaking people have revived it in one form and another. Indeed, it is a surprising fact that there are today more and better-informed white 'liberals' (in this sense) in the Union than ever before in its history.

South African 'Liberals'

Who are these liberals? They are not grouped in any one political party or organisation, although there is a small Liberal Party. Some of the liberals are to be found in the four English-speaking universities, among members of the teaching staff and, even more, among present and recent students. Others are to be found in some of the leading Christian churches, whose leaders still hold that what is morally wrong can never be politically right. A wide consensus of religious opinion has condemned the prevailing policy of rigid racial separation. Yet another body of liberals survives in a small number of trade unions which keep alive the universal socialist ideal of the brotherhood of all working men.

It may be that liberal thought will survive in spite of the setback it has suffered and in the face of the dangers that may still lie ahead of it. For controversy and dissent are one of the Union's best traditions. Ever since, in the eighteen-twenties, the famous Scottish missionary, Dr. John Philip, first fought for racial equality, prevailing colour policies have always been challenged in South Africa by some South Africans, however small their number. Although liberalism is today on the defensive, its strength lies in the fact that it does provide an alternative theory (if not an effective opposition) to the popular theory, as even the ruling party has recognised. This alternative stimulates a constant ferment of discussion, which has not been without effect. For if one looks beneath the sound and fury of current controversy, there is perceptible among all sections of the people a slowly deepening sense of civilisation, that is nourished by an indigenous liberalism which cannot easily be eradicated. This view is supported by an interesting piece of research into racial attitudes. One of my colleagues, Professor Douglas MacCrone, lately made a statistical analysis of the opinions held by a group of university students in Johannesburg. His results showed that English-speaking students with parents both born in South Africa were more liberal and more tolerant in outlook than students with one or both parents born in Britain or elsewhere in Europe.

The importance of the tiny liberal group cannot be measured by its numbers. In a country where everything literally appears in terms of black and white, the existence of some white people who are said to be 'on the side of the Africans' is of immense value. These people are proof of the fact that in the long run the issues at stake cannot be settled on a purely racial basis. The efforts of liberals are a major factor in preventing the struggle from becoming a battle between white and black. Yet that danger remains. The cry for unity among all white people is regularly heard. In times of special crisis it has an emotional force that cannot be exaggerated. Whatever their superficial differences, at heart the English and the Afrikaner sections of the white community (excepting only the small liberal group) are agreed on the necessity to maintain white supremacy.

Deep Divisions

The cry for national white unity has, however, never been more than a political aspiration. White South Africans remain divided. They are divided by language, by religion, and by social tradition. In these days they are, in a sense, more deeply divided than they were a generation ago. The division is also due to the curious fact already mentioned—the fact that political power is securely in Afrikaner hands while the lion's share of economic power remains comfortably in British hands. Political power in other countries has normally come to a group or party as a consequence of its growing economic strength. The economic resources of the Afrikaners have certainly increased but they are still no match for those of the English-speaking section, which, owing to support from British capital, retains its superior economic position.

This separation of economics from politics holds one of the real clues to an understanding of South African life. It also explains why a certain measure of freedom is still exercised by the people of all races. South Africa is a difficult country for any one race to dominate completely. Picture to yourself four firemen holding a blanket taut. They each pull in a different direction. Whatever happens, the blanket does not collapse. South Africa is sustained by some such inter-play of social forces, and this uneasy balance constitutes its present salvation.

—Third Programme

The Listener

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Modern Exploration

SIR RAYMOND PRIESTLEY, part of whose presidential address to the British Association appears on another page, chose for his theme Antarctica, or, to be precise, 'Twentieth-century Man against Antarctica'. At the beginning of the century polar exploration was another name for high adventure, firing the imagination and, like the conquest of Everest, challenging man's capacity to pit himself against the elements and gain a footing where human feet had never trod before. The emphasis was on physical endurance and on the opportunities vouchsafed for the exercise of personal courage and even heroism; witness the action of the immortal Captain Oates. Moreover, explorers in those days really did turn their backs on the world, entering on a state of isolation, and the fact had to be faced that once they had set out they might never be heard of again. As Sir Raymond relates, when the members of the Shackleton expedition left New Zealand on New Year's Day 1908, for all that their countrymen knew about what was happening to them in the ensuing twelve months, they might have taken off into space. Today by contrast Dr. Fuchs, in charge of the Commonwealth transantarctic expedition, remains in constant touch with his colleagues in Antarctica; and airmen are flying hundreds of tons of stores from New Zealand to those parts as an ordinary Service transport operation.

What may emerge from all this in a similar tale of years is anybody's guess, though according to the view expressed by Sir Raymond earlier in his address, as the great southern continent is opened up, 'Antarctic exploration and exploitation is bound to become more and more an affair of governments rather than, as in the past, of individual adventurers or scientific societies', and if experience is anything to go by, 'less and less scientific result will accrue per unit of energy and money expended'. That the polar regions instead of being the scene of high personal adventure are destined to develop into political and strategic stamping grounds is yet one more example of the way science sets the world as many problems as it solves.

In the days after the first war the realists, as they were called, used to say that war was inevitable because of man's aggressive instincts and more particularly because of his love of adventure with its attendant perils. As a counter-argument the advocates of peace would point to the many other means that existed for satisfying these combative instincts and would cite as an example Nansen's great explorations to the north. Whatever validity there may or may not have been in the argument, its appeal today would lose something of its force. This is far from suggesting that there are not plenty of opportunities for adventure (short of war) in our mid-twentieth-century world. Of course there are. But conditions are different and so, too, it may be surmised, is the nature of adventure. The mere fact that however remote your travels may be means do exist for 'keeping in touch' is but one illustration of the effect which science has had on modern exploration of the earth. When it comes, as sooner or later it will, to the exploration of outer space—that is something else again: plenty of room for adventure, courage, and heroism there. But will the space travellers experience quite the same thrill as Shackleton and his men felt when they left the coast of New Zealand knowing that they were cutting themselves off from all communication? The thrill of the spacemen will no doubt be immeasurably greater. But its quality will be different. Man against Antarctica will have been replaced by technological man, with all that that implies, against the universe.

What They Are Saying

Foreign broadcasts on the London conference

IN CONTRAST to the moderate tone adopted by Moscow radio during the London Conference on Suez—except in Arabic—a Moscow transmission on August 26, quoting *Pravda*, described the representatives of the eighteen out of twenty-two nations supporting the 'colonial Dulles plan' as 'the dissident group', and said the plan 'would in fact constitute a form of colonial rule in a now independent Egypt'. It spoke of an 'unethical stand' of the advocates of the plan, and described the Indian proposal as 'a plan for a fair settlement on democratic lines'. *Pravda* went on:

Clearly, a certain group of states intends that Egypt's rejection of the ultimatum delivered to her should provide grounds for an accusation of intransigence and later free their hands for subsequent aggressive action. The very fact of the attempt of certain colonial powers to split the London conference and to set up outside its framework a special group for delivering an ultimatum to Egypt testifies to the moral and political defeat of the colonisers. The advocates of a 'positions of strength' solution to the Suez problem should be warned that such action can lead to serious international complications. . . . The U.S.S.R. will continue to do its utmost to settle the Suez question by peaceful means—the means of negotiation on a basis of equality and justice.

Moscow broadcasts in Greek said the American plan 'aims at strengthening the positions of the U.S.A. in the Middle East at the expense of the British and French'.

East German broadcasts were at pains to explain why Persia and Pakistan had supported the majority plan. According to Berlin radio:

Many observers expected a more consistent attitude on the part of these countries. But it must not be forgotten that Iran is tied to the Baghdad Pact and Pakistan to both this and the South-east Asia Pact and that they are not, therefore, in full possession of their independence. A Czechoslovak broadcast regretted that Pakistan, Turkey, Persia, and Ethiopia, by acting as they did, 'have given the adherents of colonial principles the possibility of operating with the false thesis of "support from at least some of the countries of the African-Asian area"'.

On August 28, President Nasser accepted the invitation to meet the five-nation committee. Earlier, Egyptian newspapers, as quoted from Cairo, claimed that the London conference had 'ended with Egypt in control'. *Al-Gumhuriya* had described the Dulles plan as contradictory because, while accepting the principle of Egyptian sovereignty, envisaged making the Suez Canal a 'sovereign state within sovereign Egypt': it called for a conference on the internationalisation of the Panama Canal and all international waterways, including Gibraltar, Aden, Singapore, the Dardanelles, and Bosphorus. It also asserted that 'imperialism is now sure that any attempt to internationalise the Canal by force will mean war'. The Arab News Agency reported that Colonel Nasser, in an interview with an Iraq newspaper, stated: 'The Baghdad Pact is finished. This is an old story which has ended, thank God'.

The *Times of India* described the London conference as having been 'fantastically unreal', while the *Hindustan Times* said it was no real diplomatic achievement to get eighteen out of twenty-two nations agree on the plan to be presented to Cairo. It added that even though the Indian plan would be more acceptable to Egypt, Colonel Nasser should not summarily reject the majority proposals. But, in general, the Indian press supported the idea of a more comprehensive conference—the only answer to the dilemma. From Ceylon the *Daily News* was quoted as saying that if Britain persisted in her demand for international control, she must presumably hope to 'thrust it down Egypt's throat either by open war, threat of military force, or economic blockade'.

Any such action would be highly immoral. In such circumstances Britain would alienate herself completely from Asian opinion, which would brand her as an aggressor. Moreover, military action against Egypt would bring the wrath of the entire Arab world on Britain's head, and the first act in retaliation would be to cut Britain off from oil sources in the Middle East.

From France, *Le Figaro* was quoted for the view that even some Egyptian Ministers feared that a final break with the West would leave Egypt almost alone with the Soviet Union as an ally. Hence, Colonel Nasser might be willing to make some concessions to effect a compromise—but not if he thought there was any chance of Britain giving way. In the opinion of the Swiss paper *Tat*, India had emerged from the London conference in a somewhat embarrassed isolation on the side of Egypt and the Soviet Union.

Did You Hear That?

TRANSATLANTIC LINK

'THE FINAL LENGTH of the transatlantic telephone cable has been laid, and it is expected that the whole link will be in operation in a few weeks' time', said J. H. M. SYKES in a talk in the B.B.C.'s European Service. 'This £15,000,000 project is a major technical achievement, designed jointly by British and American scientists. There are two cables, one to carry the speech of the thirty-six conversations which can take place at once in one direction, and the other to bring back thirty-six replies.

'To carry speech on any sort of cable is rather a problem: the cable insulation, so to speak, "absorbs" the electrical impulses so that even after a short distance—a dozen or so miles—the speech on a plain cable link would become weak and distorted. So, for land trunk lines, amplifiers, or "repeaters", have to be installed at frequent intervals. This is relatively easy on land, but the valves used in the repeaters need power and, as we have thought until recently, a certain amount of supervision. But how can power for valve amplifiers be brought to the repeaters in a submarine cable 2,000 miles long? And how can they be supervised at the bottom of the Atlantic?

'The engineers solved these difficult problems by designing, after years of experiment, a repeater housed in a flexible tube only seven centimetres in diameter, the cable itself being four centimetres thick. They took more than seven years to develop valves and other electronic components which would have a degree of reliability greater than has ever been achieved before: for example, all the metal parts of the repeaters are gold plated, to ensure complete freedom from corrosion. It is confidently expected that the repeaters—of which there are fifty-two on each of the two cables—will give completely trouble-free service for at least twenty years, and probably longer. The cable will provide perfect quality and reliability for telephone calls to the U.S. and Canada from any part of the British Isles and, through Britain, from all parts of the Continent'.

A SCHOOLBOYS' DREAM WORLD

In the thirty-first Model Engineer Exhibition, at the New Horticultural Hall, Westminster, there are more than 500 models on show, and they are the work of enthusiasts from all over Britain with a few from overseas countries, including Spain and America. The youngest exhibitor is a boy of ten from Harrow, who is showing a model of H.M.S. *Van-guard*, and the oldest a man of eighty-seven from Bexhill-on-Sea, who



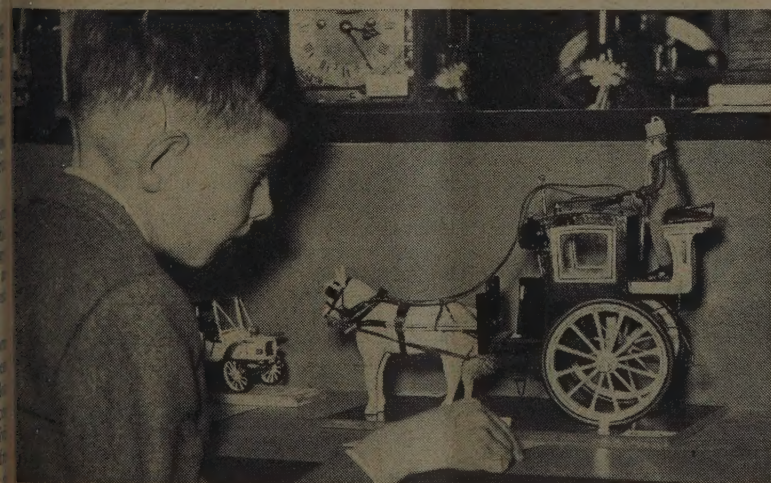
On view at the Model Engineer Exhibition: steam-driven model of a roundabout—

has built a model of a Lowestoft trawler. JOHN TIDMARSH described the exhibition in 'The Eye-witness'.

'One of the first things that caught my attention', he said, 'was the wheezy melody of a fairground roundabout, shining brass and glass, violent colours and galloping horses, steam driven, perfect in every shrieking detail. It is not only the most valuable model in the show—worth some £3,000—but also one of the most fascinating. It weighs about five hundredweight and was built by Mr. Herbert Slack of Chapel-en-le-Frith. It took him nine years to make. You may have seen it, because it is used to introduce the B.B.C.'s children's television programme "Whirligig".'

'This exhibition is truly a schoolboys' dream world—model railways and tramways, ships ranging from fully-rigged sailing vessels to models of the *Queen Elizabeth* and the Russian cruiser *Sverdlov*, power-driven aircraft and tiny, diesel racing cars that scream on rails round a circular track reaching speeds of thirty miles an hour. The problem is where to look first. Perhaps the marine tank for the demonstration of radio-controlled boats: this particular line, I am told, is becoming more and more popular with modellers. Then, perhaps, a short ride from one end of the hall to the other on a train drawn by a steam locomotive—an exact copy in design and working of a full-size railway engine. There is another interesting railway exhibit—a model of the station at St. Albans Abbey, Hertfordshire, exactly as it was thirty years ago. This is the work of ten boys and two teachers from Enfield Technical College. They were helped by some old plans and photographs lent to them by British Railways, and they worked through part of their holiday to get the model finished in time for the exhibition.

'But it would be a mistake to pass by too quickly some of the less spectacular exhibits. There is a precision machine-saw-bench for example, made and used by two ship modellers. It will plane wood down until it is not much thicker than paper. Then there are model Sherman tanks and a stand that shows you how to make simple battery-run machines, using a few old tins, paper, cardboard, and glue. In the model-boat section something that caught my eye



—and a model of a hansom cab

was a small seaside motor-launch made by a London man who is deaf and blind. It is a remarkable piece of work, and it is perhaps in this section—for instance in the rigging of some of the sailing ships—that you can see some of the best examples of the incredibly fine craftsmanship of men like pastry-cooks and policemen, pawnbrokers and coal miners, who make models as a hobby'.

NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN LAPLAND

The Lapps live in the northern parts of Sweden, Norway, and Finland, and are a race rather than a nation. Now, a new milestone in their social and cultural development has been reached at a conference at Karasjok in Norway, near the Finnish border. Speaking from Oslo to 'The Eye-witness', ROLAND HILL said: 'Two years ago, at the first conference for the Lapps of the three countries, organised by the societies for promoting Lapp culture, and also by the Lapps themselves, one of them there said: "If we don't assert ourselves, and do it at once, we shall have to begin living up in the sky". Until recently it was still considered natural for the Lapps to withdraw to undisturbed regions as the dominating national populations filled up what they considered to be the empty spaces within their boundaries. But for some time there has been no more territory to retire to, and still the new roads, the tourists, the mines, and other developments continue to spread, thus hindering the free use of much territory for the Lapp, who has, unfortunately, in many respects been regarded as an ignorant museum piece to be set aside.

'However, during the days of this second conference, where all three chairmen are Lapps, as are also the majority of those attending and taking part, one can see a new phase. Language takes pride of place, status and dignity restored, doubly restored, in fact, because they are recognised by the Governments concerned. A few Lapps trained in professions such as teaching, law, and local government are leading the way, asserting both rights and responsibilities, determined to safeguard their heritage as a dignified minority within their lands, but also determined to exercise their local majority rights to protect and preserve for Lapp prosperity the access and exploitation of minerals, fishing, and natural resources within their sub-Arctic localities'.

THE PRINCESS CARABOO

T. A. RYDER, speaking in the West of England Home Service, told the story of Princess Caraboo, who mysteriously arrived in the Gloucestershire village of Almondsbury one evening during the spring of 1817.

'Her clothes did not look English', he said, 'certainly not rural; they were swathed round her rather than fitting her. She had black hair and dark eyes and her hands were soft and clean as though they had never known hard work. When she was greeted by some of the bystanders, she answered in a language they did not understand. By signs she made them understand that she was too tired to go any further that night and

wanted to rest in the village. But nobody was willing to take her into his house. Then someone thought that they ought to inform the local magistrate. So a man went off to Knowle Park, the big house where Mr. Worrall lived, to let him know what had happened. Both Worrall and his wife came down to see what was going on, and Mrs. Worrall kind-heartedly took the girl with them to their home at Knowle Park, although at first she did not seem too eager to go. It was Good Friday, and as they entered the house the stranger saw a plate of hot-cross buns. She picked up one of the buns and cut off the top, marked with the cross, and placed it on her bosom. The Worralls took this as a sign that the girl was a Christian.

'She was questioned again in English, but did not seem to understand and could only reply in the unknown language she had used before. She was then handed some paper and a pen but it was some while before she understood what was wanted of her. Then she wrote one word: "Caraboo". They took that to be her name, because as she wrote it she pointed to herself.

Many visitors came to see her at Knowle, many tried her wild languages other than English but she could not understand any of the commoner European tongues. Then one day, a friend of the Worralls came to the house. He had made several voyages to the Indies and picked up a few words of eastern languages. He managed after a time, to get a story out of the girl.

'It appeared that she was the daughter of a man of high rank in her own country, an island called Javasus, and that her people were Chinese in origin. She told

how, while walking in her garden, attended by three women servants, she had been seized by some men from a pirate vessel. They had gagged and bound her and carried her away to their ship. A few days later, the pirates sold her to the captain of a brig, but he soon sold her again to the captain of another ship. But when the ship lay close to land one night, she jumped overboard and swam ashore. That was how she arrived at Almondsbury.

'There seemed to be some confirmation of the story in the fact that she was an excellent swimmer and spent a good deal of time in the pond in the grounds at Knowle Park. She was also good at archery. As her knowledge of English improved she was able to give an account of life in her home country. She told how she travelled around in a palanquin, or litter, carried on men's shoulders. And she described the clothes that she wore at home, sandals with wooden soles, seven peacock feathers as a head-dress.

'Some months later, another friend of the Worralls sent some of her handwriting to a young man at Oxford. He noticed that the writing consisted mainly of meaningless scrawls and a few words and part sentences in Portuguese, and told his friend that he suspected that Caraboo was an impostor.

'A few days afterwards, a visitor walked into the kitchen at Knowle Park. Caraboo was there. The visitor looked at her closely and said: "Ah! Mary Baker, how came you here?" The girl was out of the bag with a vengeance. Caraboo was no princess. She was the daughter of a cobbler from Witheridge in Devon'.



Lapp conference in session in the court-room at Karasjok, and (below) one of the delegates in outdoor dress



The Antarctic Today and in the Future*

By SIR RAYMOND PRIESTLEY

TWICE in the past, in 1882-83 and 1932-33, scientists have planned an International Polar Year. Today they plan again, but, as is fitting, on a vastly larger scale, the International Geophysical Year. Although it is intended to cover the whole earth with chains of stations from pole to pole, the exploration of the physical phenomena in and over Antarctica is a most striking component of the plan. A long-range practical objective has been described as a better understanding of climatic variation and the study of the nature of long-period climatic change. We are apt to forget how much the present pattern of our civilisation depends upon the latent heat of ice. If the present ice-sheets of the world melted in a hurry, sea-level would rise about 100 feet. The present long-term tendency to glacier retreat is, however, accompanied by a rise in sea level of only four inches a century. The rise in the temperature of ocean water that accompanies this climatic change has important repercussions on the fishing industry upon which the welfare and livelihood of tens of thousands of European families depend. Another question, still a matter of controversy, is whether continents move, and, if so, at what rate. A fuller knowledge of the ionosphere will help in improving wireless communications which are now essential to our mode of life. Upper atmospheric studies are important in the future development of high-flying aircraft.

Capital of Scientific Knowledge

The immediate observations that will be made in 1957-58, chosen because it is a year with nearly sunspot maximum, are, however, concerned with the exact recording of physical phenomena which will appear many as the purest of pure science. Yet Sir Edward Appleton has lately reminded us that history has taught us to regard pure science as the capital of scientific knowledge, capital that, from time to time, as yielded astonishing dividends.

The world is entering on its latest experiment in a big way. A mere enumeration of the subjects of study is evidence enough of the comprehensive nature of the programme. Meteorology, the study of aurora and airglow, geomagnetism, ionospherics, ozone, cosmic rays, glaciology, solar activity, variation in longitude and latitude, seismology and oceanography, are all embraced. I can even visualise a little geology being done on the side—of particular interest to me, a one-time geologist—though most of the people concerned may never handle antarctic rock. The total cost of the plan has been assessed at £100,000,000. No less than forty-five nations have pledged themselves to play their part. In and around Antarctica there will be over forty stations, of which three will be, respectively, at the geographic pole, the geomagnetic pole, and the Pole of Inaccessibility. These last will be supplied and maintained entirely by air.

The most spectacular element in the plan is the examination of the upper regions of the atmosphere. Today man reaches further towards space than he has ever done before. It is planned to employ man-made satellites, despatched by means of three-stage rockets to a height of 30 miles, there to girdle the earth in an elliptical path, which varies between 200 and 800 miles, in ninety minutes dead. The satellite is expected to stay up days, or weeks, before it falls and is consumed, as are millions of the meteorites that enter the atmosphere every day. Large rockets will reach out—their tracks like slender fingers—to several hundred miles above the earth, carrying heavy loads of recording apparatus. Rockoons, smaller rockets launched from balloons twenty-five miles up, can reach a height of over sixty miles. Small rockets may be despatched from aircraft in flight.

Balloons will be launched trailing a variety of instruments, tracked throughout their course by observers, eventually parachuting to earth. Automation, a cause of anxiety and unrest here at home, can be seen in the more detachment as an essential element of the International Geophysical Year plan. Perhaps it is at its most dramatic in the so-called 'Grasshopper', a small recording device weighing 200 pounds which can be dropped from an aeroplane at any desired spot. As described to me, it automatically opens, rights itself on its six legs in

true insect fashion, and goes into action. 'It gathers weather information at predetermined intervals, transcribes it automatically into Morse, and transmits it by radio at seventeen words a minute'. It works for sixty days and records and transmits surface wind speed and direction, temperature, barometric pressure and humidity.

Already the International Geophysical Year has begun to work its transformation of the antarctic scene. Direct American flights from New Zealand to Antarctica have taken place. The Russians are in regular wireless touch with Moscow and plan a supply route direct from the U.S.S.R. by air. They have just made the first winter antarctic flights. The continent is becoming studded with little towns. Icebreakers plough the antarctic seas. In this great effort Britain plans to play a worthy part. One major expedition, sponsored by the Royal Society, is already established near 76 degrees S. in the Weddell Sea. The bases belonging to the Falkland Island Dependencies Survey are being reinforced to help.

Dr. Fuchs' transantarctic expedition is a horse of a rather different colour, though it will, as a side-issue, contribute to the plan. He intends to cross the antarctic continent from west to east. It has been said in criticism that the British have been so obsessed with the story of Shackleton and Scott that they cling unduly to outmoded ways. We have, it is true, suffered from too strict adherence to tradition in the past. There is an element of gambling in the present plan. But Fuchs intends to take seismic soundings of the ice depth together with a continuous gravity traverse as he makes his way across. In addition to tractors and aircraft, he will have auxiliary dog transport to help in the examination of rock exposures he may meet. But of all the modern equipment the small electronic device weighing less than one pound, by which he can home on his moving column from distances up to twenty-five miles, attracts me most. If he is fortunate he may come back with results that will, of their kind, be as valuable as anything his more sedentary competitors can possibly produce. And there is an element of adventure and risk in his plan that will, for any normal citizen, definitely add to the fascination of this particular venture. Good luck to him.

When I left England with Shackleton in 1907 I travelled to Australia in six weeks by sea at a cost of £19 from a London where the four-wheeler horse-cab was still commonplace; where wireless was in its infancy and a criminal could still hope to outpace the law by ocean travel. I lived in a world which was, by and large, convinced that mankind was unique and life confined to Earth. The expedition left New Zealand on New Year's Day, 1908, and for all its countrymen knew about what was happening in the next twelve months we might have taken off into space.

The other week I returned to England for the British Association meeting from Australia in inside three days at a cost of £300. I find Dr. Fuchs in constant touch with his colleagues in Antarctica. I travelled across a world in which a Harvard professor of astronomy has recently asserted in a London Sunday newspaper that life exists on a million other worlds. His country proposes to launch an earth satellite as part of its International Geophysical Year programme. American airmen are flying hundreds of tons of stores from New Zealand to Antarctica as an ordinary Service transport operation.

Mankind at a Crossroads

Who can predict what may happen in a similar tale of years in the future? Antarctica may be colonised: man may have landed on the moon. On the other hand, it is as likely that, if man's passions get out of hand—and control of emotions is not a notable twentieth-century trait—the survivors of mankind may be plunged in a Dark Age such as has succeeded civilisations of the past at least nine times in the chequered history of mankind. Man is indeed at a crossroads today. We of the British Association may well ask ourselves what we can do to help the world to make the choice that will ensure the survival and further progress of humanity perhaps to the point when man is no longer earth-bound.

*The last part of the presidential address on 'Twentieth-century Man against Antarctica' given to this year's meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, now being held in Sheffield

So far as the future of Antarctica is concerned, we still have too little to go upon for speculation to cut much ice. Now that atomic energy is available and atomic power is immediately ahead, the mere strategic threat of a monopoly of Antarctica by any one power should by itself suffice to keep the interest of the nations alive. Great and valuable mineral deposits there must be in any continent of this size and kind, though nothing of significance has so far been found. Prospecting on the continental scale, let alone exploitation, will be so costly that, apart from a stroke of luck, it will require finance and organisation at least on the national basis to ensure success. In 1951 the £200,000,000 Kitimat project in British Columbia was started in a completely undeveloped area and is just about to pay off. But this is based on cheap local power and will be used to process aluminium ore brought 4,000 miles from Jamaica.

In Antarctica something on this scale would be the least that would be required should large and valuable ore bodies be found. Airborne magnetometers and stereoscopic-camera mapping are already in use in antarctic surveying. Future exploitation lies with the co-ordinated use of airborne surveyors carrying out wide sweeps and of helicopter-borne ground parties equipped for high-speed core drilling and rock sampling. Attention must needs be concentrated, as at present, on the relatively few exposed rock surfaces where mining could be carried out without difficulties arising from ice movement. Once the ore is located the whole enterprise could gradually go underground. Tunnel or adit entry

might be followed by the construction of underground engine-room hoisting gear, and mineral dressing plants. Floating power-stations could be withdrawn for maintenance during the 'closed' season might be a useful expedient in the initial stages, but land-based stations would be essential to any permanent settlement. Once a footing had been obtained anything might happen in these days of technological man.

It has been suggested, for example, that the antarctic might have future use as a vermin-free store for the world's periodical food supplies. In this great natural refrigerator these might be preserved against the needs of future generations, since widespread crop failures might otherwise spell disaster to a world whose population seems destined to increase. Again, one of the main claims for atomic power is that it could be maintained for long periods in remote places with a minimum attention and thus might be used for the development of the desert areas of the world, uninhabited today because they are too cold, too hot, too dry. If atomic-powered icebreakers can be built, why not atomic-powered settlements on the antarctic mainland? But everything will depend upon the discovery of a worth-while economic objective, and this is not at the moment in sight.

So the chances are that, for the remainder of this century, Antarctica will remain the scene of investigations in pure rather than applied science. But man may yet find a way to overcome the latent heat of ice and add a seventh habitable continent to the six he already has in thrall.—*Home Service*

From Brighton to Blackpool

SIR PATRICK ABERCROMBIE on a case for regional planning

ALTHOUGH in the matter of land development there is some confusion both on general principles and in particular instances, I think we are all agreed that this is a small country with a big population and that the best use must be made of the limited number of its acres; but that we are not ready for nationalisation of land. Indeed, we thought that our troubles were over when Mr. Silkin, as he then was, on the wave of enthusiasm for reconstruction after the war, produced his great Act for universal planning, after persuading everyone, including the House of Lords, to give up to the state the most valuable part of their land—its potential value for building or development—in return for a share of a lump sum which was known to be too small. England, Wales, and even Scotland could now be planned to produce what is called, in planning jargon, a logical system of physical environment for convenience and amenity, urban and rural. If Mr. Silkin produced the powers and machinery, there were the trinity of reports, Barlow, Scott, and Uthwart, to guide us on actual needs: Barlow on the location of the industrial population, Scott on the impact of town on country, and Uthwart on economics.

So all seemed plain sailing, until it was found that the Government imposed the hated development charge on almost anything anyone ever wanted to do to improve one's property, except perhaps the colour of the paint of one's front door. So the present Government earned universal gratitude by abolishing it and at the same time returning the development value to the owner: Mr. Silkin's Act was emasculated but we were left with universal land planning, which antedated it by four years, and was a legacy of the post-war Coalition.

Among the relics of virility left in the Silkin Act was the suppression of a multitude of little and insufficiently equipped planning authorities, rural and urban. The active work was handed over to the County Councils and County Boroughs, large and efficiently organised and staffed bodies under the headmastership of a Minister who used various aliases (Health, Town and Country Planning, Housing and Local Government). Although the latest alias, which substituted Housing for Planning, did not please the planners, it was a useful, popular one, and the development plans for the whole country have been prepared. But here a paradox has occurred: though the number of planning authorities has been reduced there has been less real regional planning—the reason being that most old historic counties no longer represent geographical units.

Take as a case in point the so-called conurbations—those groups of big cities with their surrounding countryside, like constellations of stars with their interstellar spaces—whose area spills over into several coun-

ties. Before the war the attempt was made to treat each conurbation as a whole by creating advisory committees made up of representatives from all the interested local authorities of the region. This attempt has been frustrated by the old rivalry which has persisted since county boroughs were given their special status. It is true, some regional representatives—such as the Greater London, the Clyde Valley, Tyneside—exist—they can be ignored and often are. Again, it is possible for the Minister to co-ordinate separately prepared plans—but this is at best a second-hand act. There is also consultation between the authorities themselves. In what we need is genuine co-operation, as defined by Dr. Johnson in his dictionary, 'to labour jointly with another of the same end', where consultation he describes as 'the act of consulting; secret deliberation' and he gives a quotation from Clarendon: 'Many things were here consulted for the future, yet nothing was positively resolved'.

Take Lancashire for example: there is no regional advisory report for the whole county; the county plan looks like a blanket with seventeen holes burnt in it by the county boroughs; no new towns have been decided upon (though it is agreed they are wanted); Manchester is dissatisfied by the Minister's decision not to allow it to create new towns of 60,000 or so people, in north Cheshire, but to keep a stretch of miraculously preserved agricultural land as the southern green belt to south-east Lancashire. Such fundamental differences of opinion in regional planning exist; in place of continuous collaboration we have periodic encounters between forceful town and county clerks, supported by pugnacious counsel and plausible expert witnesses, with a general ministerial inspector holding the ring.

But I would not be content with a group of agreed regional plans corresponding with the six major conurbations as defined by the 1951 census. We have always been shy of the idea of national planning owing to the political implication of the term, but I think a case can be made out for a continuous plan from Brighton to Blackpool: this would include the central strip of industrial England which has been called somewhat unfortunately, 'the Coffin'. These two seaside recreation towns stand like lighted candles at the head and foot. This 250-mile strip of central urban England may seem small in comparison with the 600-mile Atlantic seaboard from Portland, Maine to Norfolk, Virginia, so brilliantly described by Christopher Tunnard, but it presents the same challenge to a bold conception of continuous planning; not only must the green belts separating individual towns and their surrounding conurbation be included in this conception, but wider agricultural areas must be given a special status.

Within the elongated 'coffin' from Brighton to Blackpool there

large areas of farm land which must be kept free from any grouped or sporadic building, except that required for strictly agricultural uses. The land between London and the coast, the paradise of the stockbroker, may be the most difficult to safeguard. This central strip of industrial England from Brighton to Blackpool contains five out of the six main urban groups of England and Wales, or about 16,000,000 people, nearly two-fifths of the population, and although the community of interests between the northern group, Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds, Sheffield, and their neighbours, with Greater London in the south, and Birmingham, Leicester, Nottingham, and Coventry in the middle, does not seem at once apparent, they should certainly be planned as a unit for industry, population, communication, and major open spaces of all kinds: the area indeed has the distinction, which is equally a grave responsibility, of containing one national park, the Peak, and several examples of outstanding natural beauty such as long stretches of the North and South Downs, and Charnwood Forest.

If regional planning were tackled on such a scale the twin policy of decentralisation and redevelopment might at last be made to work and work sensibly. Some time ago it was announced that the chairman of the L.C.C. Housing Committee was considering 'exporting' some of London's overspill to the little Cheshire town of Nantwich, among sixty other welcoming 'intakers' which he was proposing to visit. Finance has been the undoing of the Town Development Act: but a comprehensive plan of decentralisation might have suggested that Nantwich was more closely linked with Manchester than with London. A criss-cross game, without method, between exporting and importing authorities is a little too Britishly haphazard, in spite of the friendly luncheon party atmosphere between mighty and minute boroughs in which it has been conducted.

In addition to this central strip of industrial England, there are several grouped areas for which fully collaborated regional planning is required: these are Tyne and Tees-side; Cardiff, Swansea, and Bristol; Portsmouth, Southampton, and Bournemouth; and there are also isolated great cities, Norwich, Hull, Plymouth, which do their own planning but might well be associated with the neighbouring county areas.

The counties have been saddled with the planning of many smaller cities and country towns of the greatest interest, beauty, and complexity (of historic preservation and new growth: e.g. Wantage near Harwell). I think it is unfair to ask a harassed county planning officer to undertake these tasks, and in fact the 'Town Maps' are often almost devoid of constructive suggestions. To these urban areas, great and small, must be added the open country ranging from hill and moor to normal rural England. The wilder country is being scheduled under special legislation as National Parks.

What other machinery better than the existing county and county borough set-up can I suggest? This is a large subject upon which a boundary commission made some valuable proposals a year or two ago—none of them acted upon. But I believe that there must be a system of 'three-tier' administration and planning: national (by means of a central commission); regional (with executive powers, the regions to be of a reasonable size—the 'coffin' is too large, Lancashire too disjointed, but Greater London is essential); and, lastly, local (on readjusted boundaries). By 'tiers' I mean that the central commission would deal with main trunk roads and railways and air: location of basic industries

and population: agricultural and forest reserves. This would leave the relevant Ministries free to exercise judicial functions, with appeal, when need be, to the Cabinet. Subdivision of powers and finance will not be easy, but it can be done provided there are 'no more parades' of advisory committees.

Even more difficult than devising the right machinery is deciding what action, social, economic, and aesthetic, is required. The recent publication of *Outrage* and the daily work of the Council for the Preservation of Rural England show how inadequate in many respects are the results which our powers produce; and we are still uncertain as to many of the broader strategic policies which we should pursue. London, while it is unique, yet poses the problems of the normal great town in its most acute form. It is Megalopolis in the world sense that New York is, but it is also the overgrown, overblown, sprawling mass which is found everywhere, and for which remedies have been proposed and in small—all too small—part put into practice.

The report on the 1951 census of Greater London and the five other great conurbations raises the fundamental question as to what we are to do: are we to continue the present policy of dispersal or reverse it and concentrate? The census has shown us something we already knew, but without certainty, that the efforts at dispersal have not made any notable impression on central London as the powerful magnet of employment: the million people who travel every morning into the County of London have not diminished. We know well what this diurnal movement of commuters means in bodily and mental fatigue, waste of time and money. Though we still await the further census report on the 'usual residence and work place' of these commuters, there is enough information before us to raise that eternal dilemma, when to follow trends and when to fight against them.



The central strip of industrial England which has been called 'the coffin'

Is the former right—to bow to inevitable evolution—or is that a return to Victorian *laissez-faire*? Is the slowness of dispersal of home and work proof of failure?

This is not the occasion for a controversy, but I am free to state my conviction that the best remedy for the million commuters, which we all agree should be reduced (they can never be wholly abolished), is to pursue much more vigorously the policy of decentralisation, and especially decentralisation of work: there is still a large number of people who should move out if we are to obtain the maximum reasonable densities which were proposed for the County of London and which have been officially adopted.

I am not going to suggest who is responsible for the slowness in achieving the policy of dispersal. It may be remembered that there were four 'destinations': first, new towns; secondly, expanded existing towns, both within the area called Greater London, but beyond the green belt, which was to put a limit to continuous sprawl; thirdly, towns within about a fifty-mile radius, still faintly under London influence; and, finally, those at a distance beyond this. It was unfortunate that the Board of Trade, for probably good reasons of the moment, favoured the last and furthest of these four destinations, and so damped, or even prevented, the exodus of industry to the outer ring of Greater London. Faced with the alternative of 'go to South Wales, or stay in Central London', most firms chose to stay where they were. What many were ready to do was to move to larger sites in the Greater London region—to cheaper land, avoidance of long daily journeys for

workers, and, for the directors, easy touch with a small central office.

Those that were able to move—or were forced out by some special government requirement—have not regretted it. Especially I do not think factory skyscrapers are popular compared with one-storey buildings. It is difficult to say how much industry would have moved out given a free hand and how much is tied to Central London, like the docks, but I believe much more could have moved than is often stated. Office work is another dispersal uncertainty over which much argument could take place. At the other end, 'reception' was not organised as it might have been: New Towns are of course difficult to get going—it is to our international credit that we have succeeded so well—their legal basis is top-heavy (largely owing to the susceptibility of the existing Local Authorities); the Town Development Act, intended to expand existing towns, has proved financially unsuccessful and has been operated sporadically between individual towns, the 'exporter' and the 'receiver'. Finally, owing to a flaw in the Planning Act, factories vacated in central areas can be reoccupied without permission.

So the planner has suffered many rebuffs: should he give up and let things take their course? Are we merely fanatics; does not even Luton, that old-world maker of straw hats, make us despair? The Greater London Plan gave Luton a maximum population of 90,000 chiefly because its sole effluent for sewage is the river Lea, one of London's chief water supplies. No amount of purification could prevent the stream killing fish, destroying vegetation, and disgusting thirsty cattle some six miles away. A successful lawsuit sought to restrain the corporation from this pollution: since then two successive factories have been allowed, each with about 1,000,000 square feet, bringing up

the estimated (or proposed) population to 200,000. Is this complete defeat of the planner? Not necessarily: but Luton can now no longer be treated as part of Greater London—it must be taken as a new centre of the motor industry and the ample Ouse must swallow the sewage effluent and free the little Lea for London drinkers. But was this change ever considered in the context of my Brighton to Blackpool planning? What I am afraid of, is that such decisions are taken at the highest level but without fullest consideration.

Are our New Towns too narrow in their conception: instead of acting as mere relief of overcrowding should not they set up as new centres of energy and enterprise with due precaution against overgrowth by green belt and other means? I was greatly impressed in the States by the green-belt city in Maryland and a new satellite in Queens. They were not only new local communities but out to capture shopping from their mighty metropolitan neighbours, or at any rate to make shopping easier and more comfortable than in those car-infested central areas. That is the way to promote decentralisation.

In contrast to this tall talk and these 'latitudinarian' views, may I end with a quotation from my Greater London Report? 'Dominating the aim' (of central and outer London) 'is the community idea—at one end the community of the Capital of the Commonwealth, at the other the communities of simple people whose work and existence happen to lie within this metropolitan region'. What goes for London goes for the whole of central industrial England—indeed, for the whole country. However high-aspiring or far-seeing our general ideas, let us never forget that, whether people live in village or in mighty city, it is the local existence that we must consider.—*Third Programme*

Family Portraits—III

Warden of the Forest

By the EARL OF CARDIGAN

ONE of my childhood memories (which I suppose dates me a bit) is of going out with my grandfather, the old Marquess of Ailesbury, in an open carriage drawn by a pair of horses. My grandfather was sufficiently up to date to own a motor-car. (It had one cylinder, and on good days it was able to climb non-stop up the hill from Savernake station: on bad days it got half way up and stopped.) But always, when he drove for pleasure he preferred an open carriage and a pair of horses. Certainly, when he wished to take a drive around his Forest of Savernake, he left this noisy, modern thing at home, and he ordered his carriage and pair.

And so I remember sitting opposite to him, dressed in my best clothes, and rather fidgety, because I did not like sitting still and I hated my best clothes. We would start off down a long avenue, with great trees rising up and arching so that they met, far up above our heads. And then we would branch off on to one or another of the grass rides—there were miles and miles of them at Savernake, then—and the carriage would run silently; for the horses' hooves made no sound on the springy turf. There was just a faint jingle of bits now and then, and a creaking of leather when the going was uphill and the horses strained on the traces.

My grandfather could drive all round his forest in this way; but I think his favourite expedition was to a glade where there was an extremely ancient oak tree. Although then it was only a remnant, it was still called the King Oak. It had once been enormous—and it must have been of a fabulous age. I expect you know the jingle as to the age of an oak tree?

Three centuries he grows, and three he stays
Supreme in state—and in three more decays.

I am not going to vouch for that as being scientific truth; but it is not so very far out.

My grandfather would always halt the carriage when we came to the King Oak; for he liked to pause and contemplate that ancient tree. One saw that it could not last much longer—and was it really 900 years old? If so, what a history must have had! It must have been a little sapling when my first ancestor (the first that we know of) came to Savernake Forest as William the Conqueror's man in 1066, or within a year or two after that magic date. What a link with the past! And, if you come to think of it, it is our links with past history which make that history 'come alive' and seem interesting to us—the series of portraits perhaps, or of old letters



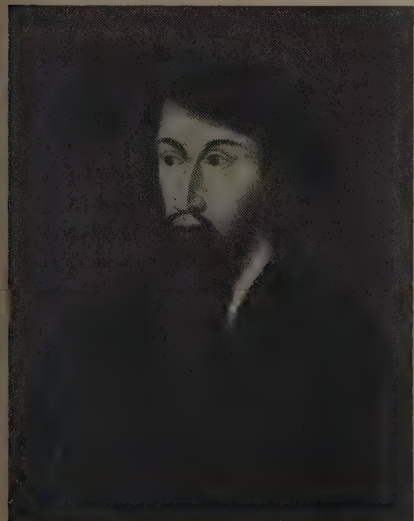
A glade in Savernake Forest

or still older deeds: account books, wills, and settlements, the visible reminders by which we can relate one generation to the one before.

I think that my grandfather, who was not a bookish man, saw Savernake Forest with its old trees as our special link with the past. Indeed it is so; for we know that the Conqueror gave my Esturmy ancestors the task of looking after what was then his royal forest. And since the first Esturmy was appointed Warden, twenty-eight people (or twenty-nine if, as my father's lieutenant, I may count myself) have successively lived on the land which the Conqueror granted, and have tried to carry out the duty which he laid on them. It is a link

that has held: the succession has never been broken. Of course, it has not always come down from father to son. Male lines die out—and when there is not a son to inherit, then it must go to a daughter and so to her son. The same blood, you see; but in the female line.

I am a Brudenell, and we Brudenells inherited Savernake from the Bruce family: we call ourselves Brudenell-Bruce. The Bruces inherited from the Seymours, and the Seymours from the Esturmies. As for the Esturmies—they did not inherit it from anyone at all. They came with the Conqueror, who pushed out an unfortunate Saxon called Aluric to make a place



Edward Seymour, first Duke of Somerset;
Warden of Savernake Forest 1536-1552
National Portrait Gallery

for them. They were, if you like, Norman upstarts: I suppose the native English would have called them that, or worse.

I must beware of saying that the Conqueror 'gave' my ancestors their land at Savernake in Wiltshire. He did not give land for nothing. It was theirs to enjoy, just so long as they did their job (which became a hereditary job) of guarding the forest and of preserving it 'both in vert and venison', that is, looking after the trees and the deer. If they had failed in this, they could have lost everything; their land, their job, their snug position in the feudal world. There were times when they nearly did. One of the early Esturmies became involved in a political plot against King Richard Coeur de Lion. He was able to save himself and his lands only by paying an immense fine. It ruined him; but his son was able to persuade the next king (King John) to issue a Charter. This was to confirm that, despite all that had happened, an Esturmy still ruled as the King's representative in Savernake Forest.

This document (which I rediscovered after it had lain for generations in a tin box in a vault) still bears a remnant of King John's Great Seal. It is just over 750 years old. I must quote you a few lines which I think are beautiful, even when translated out of their original Latin. King John, then, confirms that Henry Esturmy is to have . . .

such seisin of all the land and bailiwick of the Forest of Savernake as Geoffrey Esturmy his father had therein on the day that he died.

And Henry is to enjoy his inheritance well and peaceably, freely and quietly, wholly and honourably, in wood and in

plain, in roads and in paths, in meadows and pastures and in all places and things, with all liberties and free customs pertaining to the aforesaid land and bailiwick.

I think one can see that this Charter, so generously worded, must have been the salvation of the Esturmy family. They got into trouble on many another occasion — some of them being rather wild and lawless people; but they were never dispossessed. The head of the family might, for his misdeeds, be suspended from office; but always his Wardenship of the Forest would, in the end, be restored. Here, for example, are the words of King Edward III, reinstating Sir Henry Esturmy, the tenth Hereditary Warden. He has been in disgrace, but the King says that he is to have once again his office of 'Seneschall and Chief Forester of our Forest of Savernake in the County of Wilts', and it shall be his

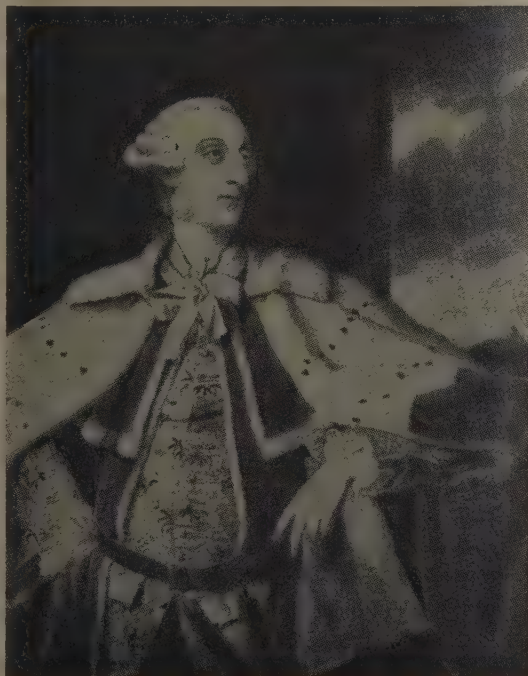
to have and to hold to himself and to his heirs of us and of our heirs . . . for ever, in the same manner as he and his ancestors have had and held it from a time whereof the memory runneth not.

They 'had and held it', you observe; for no Esturmy ever owned the Forest. Indeed, no one of that day could ever have thought of Savernake belonging to a subject—or that a subject could be the owner of any forest at all. The normal definition of a forest is that the sovereign owns it. A subject may possess woods, and a wealthy subject may have a deer park or chase; but as for a forest—no! It was left to the Seymours, when they succeeded the Esturmies, to achieve the apparently impossible. The first two or three generations of them were content to look after 'the land and the bailiwick'; but then came Sir John Seymour, who was knighted by Henry VII for his gallantry at the Battle of Blackheath. It was his daughter Jane who caught the fancy of Henry VIII, and became Queen of England. His son Edward Seymour became Duke of Somerset, Protector of the Realm; and his younger son, Thomas, High Admiral of England. Queen Jane Seymour's child became King. He was Edward VI.

What a metamorphosis! It meant that the fifteenth Hereditary Warden of Savernake Forest, the newly created Duke of Somerset, was (for a time) the most powerful person in England—the King's uncle and the effective ruler of the country. Riches and honours were his in full measure; and I do not suppose that he thought it extraordinary when his nephew the King heaped an additional gift upon him: the ownership of the forest which his forbears had merely administered under so many previous sovereigns. Extraordinary it was, however. So far as I



Charles Bruce, afterwards third Earl of Ailesbury;
Warden 1741-1747



Thomas Brudenell, Lord Bruce of Tottenham, nephew of Charles Bruce; Warden 1747-1814; portrait by Reynolds

know, no subject had ever before been given a forest. To the best of my belief, Savernake is the only forest which a subject-owns today. There is said to be an exception to every rule—and here is our exception to the general maxim that forests are owned by the Crown.

Repeating Pattern

Edward Seymour would have been a happier man, though—and he might have died peaceably with his head still on his shoulders—if he had not been tempted to venture into the maze of high politics. In my family's history, there is a sort of pattern that repeats itself. Those ancestors whose ambition made them leave the forest to play a part in the affairs of state usually got into trouble. The quieter ones, who took life as it came, and whom we see in retrospect against their forest background, were the ones who built up, or kept up, the family fortunes. And so when the Seymours followed Geoffrey Esturmy into the world of politics they, too, came to disaster. The Protector, who on the whole had governed England well, died by the executioner's axe. All his newly acquired possessions were confiscated, with the sole exception, strangely enough, of Savernake Forest. I can only suppose that the family had been there so long that their new status, as owners, somehow was overlooked. King Edward VI's gift was never rescinded.

The Protector's brother, the High Admiral, also paid with his life for his venture into high places: he had flirted with, and unsuccessfully wooed, the Princess Elizabeth, and he finally married Queen Catherine Parr. In this, he seems to have started a Seymour tradition of reckless pursuit after royal marriages. In the next generation, the Protector's son, the Earl of Hertford, secretly married Lady Catherine Grey, sister of the tragic Lady Jane. Catherine's possible claim to the throne made this an affront to Queen Elizabeth, who promptly imprisoned both husband and wife. Although locked up in separate parts of the Tower, they had two children born to them there (and not twins—first one, then another)—a nice instance of love laughing at locksmiths. The Queen was enraged. She declared the children bastards and made sure that, after those few hours of stolen happiness, the parents met no more. Catherine died, still a prisoner—and one remembers her for a few letters, written to her husband with a feeling and gentleness that make them still intensely moving.

This tragedy, however, did not prevent Hertford's grandson carrying the Seymour tradition on for yet another generation. He secretly married King James I's cousin, Lady Arabella Stuart. When it was found out (as of course it was), they tried to escape to the Continent, there to find refuge from King James' wrath; but poor Arabella was recaptured, and she too lived and died a prisoner.

But despite these disasters and follies, somehow the Seymours kept their hold on Savernake. The old forest was passed on intact from the Protector to his son. Then, through the heir born in the Tower of London, it passed to a grandson, and then—for the Seymours now, like the Esturmys, were running out of male heirs—it descended to a granddaughter. She, the heiress both of Seymours and Esturmys, married a young Lord Bruce, afterwards Earl of Ailesbury.

The Bruce Family

One might have hoped (since the Bruces, in the main, were good and steady people) that the young man would have been content to manage his bride's property, and that 'the bailiwick of the forest' would have prospered accordingly. Bruce was not personally ambitious; but he loved to be at court, in the service of Charles II (whom he adored) and later of James II, who, to him, was 'the good but unfortunate king'. And when the revolution of 1688 occurred he found himself drawn inescapably into the Jacobite camp. It could not be otherwise: he believed, simply and sincerely, in the Divine Right of Kings. 'With my steady principles' he wrote, 'I could not change kings as one doth a suit of clothes'. It was admirable; but it meant imprisonment for him in the Tower of London, and, later, an exile of forty-three years, from which he never returned. But the old Jacobite, happily, had a son, Charles Bruce, who had a natural gift and aptitude for managing land. He planted trees, he laid out farms: he saved the situation, much, I think, as Henry Esturmy had saved it when his father was in trouble, some 500 years before.

Charles Bruce, Earl of Ailesbury in his turn, failed only in one thing—he left no son to succeed him. So Savernake passed once more (the third time) into the female line: Charles Bruce bequeathed everything to his sister's son, one Thomas Brudenell. I think he chose well; for the Brudenell nephew (who became the twenty-second Warden and the eighth owner of Savernake Forest) turned out to be as good a manager

as his Bruce uncle had been. And between them, since both came in young, they covered an entire century.

You may like to think of them—the last Bruce and the first Brudenell—if you ever visit the Forest. Barring a few ancient oaks, every old tree you see there is of their planting. (The King Oak of my grandfather's day has now disappeared.) Alas, in these latter days we cannot do things on the scale that they did. You will see young trees also, a few million of them; but to achieve that, we have had to invite the Forestry Commission to come in and plant. I plant a few trees—I put in some every year—but they are able to do it on the grand scale: I am delighted that they can, and do.

So you see how, in this family history, there is always the Forest: it is the thread on which we string together all these people and episodes, so that in fact they hang together although centuries may divide them. We are fortunate in this; for forest history runs back without a break, and just when, at about the Protector's time, we run short of personal relics, such as portraits and letters and notes in an ancestor's own hand, it is then that we come to the archives which went with the job: the forest rolls, the court books, the petitions, the pardons for long-past misdeeds committed 'within our forest of Savernake in the County of Wilts'. And so it is that even the Esturmys, whose male line failed in 1427, seem real and vital enough when one walks in the Forest today. It was here they carried out the duties belonging to their wardenship. And looking round me at Savernake, it is always a pleasant reflection that we still have the land and the job that goes with it. I like to remember the twenty-eight men who have lived here before me: who tried to carry out the duty which the Conqueror gave them, and who, on the whole, must have been pretty good men at their job. Generations which by recklessness and ambition would bring the family near to ruin would be succeeded by men whose hard work and patience would gradually win back the ground that had been lost. And, somehow, by what seems at times almost a miracle, the old Forest has been passed intact down the long line of the Wardens.—*Home Service*

Light

For a certain doctrine have sunrise: great stone lips set in a vow
Of colour, words, oratory of birds; then the whirling brazen
Currencies of empire cast
Landward, all weathers, from the prow.
Subversive old silver in cloudbank falls out of grace,
Bladed golden oars haul the true disc to its place.
Time labours towards a meaning upon the wrist
—Never his meaning; can he be risen?

Come to the window, earlier, he may ponder the April mist
Before day swallows, ingests him, offers libation
Of his primal thought, of his veins.
Night's archaeologist,
He will con the old order steeped in narcosis, bone of her bone.
Coxcomby of time? the clock tower ticks by its lone,
A ploughshare might plot moon-courses over the plains;
Has-he risen?

That one grizzled patriarchal visage of water still
Haunts the copse with a dream of order—candle and basin.
Cruciform aerials
Lean from the rooftops, would fall.
Trees, they yet figure the sacred credo and ark
Of night, loyal windsong, branches of marble: dark
Is the ruler of all earth, dwarfs the benighted hills:
But he, the lover, is risen.

I might tell you of sheep growing from stupor, moving
As he moves, breathing as he, but safe in the frozen
Stances of night, night.
So the scrawl of fog, and the living
Grey upon pilgrimage, eastward, honour this sky.
Darkness is the ballad, colour, at the root of all memory.
He uncovers the tablet of darkness, that is the labour of light:
And he, of darkness, is risen.

FRANCIS WEBB

Letters to Beginners—V

Letter to a Young Dramatist

By DENIS JOHNSTON

HELLO, young dramatist, this is not either the time or the place for any potted manuals on playwriting, even if such things were possible; and I am going to assume that you need no instructions from other people in the art of milking he-goats with a sieve. In other words, you have written a play or two, maybe highly successful ones, and the time has come to compare notes with other people, people who may not have hit the jackpot as neatly as yourself, but happen to have more data, for the simple reason that they have been at it longer.

You have a style of your own that nobody has any right to interfere with, and you know that you have something to say. You are probably a little foxed by the apparent absence of any common denominator in theatrical criticism. Maybe this Sunday newspaper has said that you are a master of astringent dialogue, but that your great thoughts are immature; while at the same time this other one has taken the line that it is a pity so fine an idea has been ruined by silly lines. More probably still, your manager, by his constant self-contradiction, has shown signs of not knowing exactly what he wants; and although he has plenty of 'whats' and 'hows' to hand you, he is oddly deficient in his 'whys'. If this is the case, you have a good deal to be congratulated on; but you may also be in quite a parlous position.

'Caught in the Choppy Water'

I have noticed that, strangely enough, it is not so difficult for a new dramatist with a flair for his job to write his first, or even his second, play; it is when he comes to his third, or round about there, that he gets caught in the choppy water. New names are a delight to come across, and most people—except, of course, your personal acquaintances—wish you well, and are hoping that this new chap will turn out to be good. But once you have got a foot in the door, and are no longer a dramatist who is a charming newcomer to be discovered and encouraged, you will find a certain psychological readiness to put you in your place for a change: which place is usually an ill-fitting pigeon-hole. If you are a clever young man, you're too clever by half; if you are a poet, you're for the coteries or the Edinburgh Festival. If your flair is character, you've got nothing to say; and if you find the world inescapably funny, then you're a lightweight, probably the most serious thing of all to have said about you, because in spite of all professions to the contrary, most critics these days have a deep and abiding contempt for a joke. What is more, if you have put all you know into your first two plays, as you probably have in the generous way of beginners, you may find that the third is going to have to pay its own way on technique alone: otherwise you will be told that you are a one-play man, which is equally shattering to all future effort.

I just mention this because it is routine and shouldn't be allowed to get you down. It happened to Coward, it happened to Fry, it happened to Ustinov, and they all triumphantly survived it, particularly the popular writers like Coward, to whom stage technique is second nature. A more serious danger may arise if you are somebody like Fry and the little reviews get going on your work. It must be a shattering experience to have it borne in on you for the first time that you are a writer of importance with a role to keep up, and to see your significance analysed in print. Certainly Seán O'Casey never quite recovered from the shock. It usually ends in your having to decry all your earlier work, as he has done, or else start acting yourself like—you know who!

So never read articles on yourself, if you take my advice: it requires far more self-control than to keep off drink but it is even more important. This does not mean, of course, that criticism is a thing to be ignored at any stage of our careers. The stage is essentially a rough-and-tumble medium: that is what most of us like about it; and the basis of making a success of it is a continual dissatisfaction with everything that one has done before. Most criticism, after you have become what they call 'an established dramatist'—in other words, an old lag of whom the worst is expected—is perfectly well-founded and quite sincere. But what one has to develop is a nose for distinguishing the criticism itself from the reason that is given for it, if any.

You may already have noticed this curious feature of the stage, that as often as not you can satisfy adverse comment on your work by doing exactly the opposite of what is demanded. This is not owing to any peculiar stupidity on the part of our advisers: it is simply because of the fact that the stage is so co-operative a business, depending so much on the interplay of author, director, actors, and even the audience, that it is often the hardest thing in the world to put one's finger on the real cause of a play's success or failure. If it were not so hard, more managers would be millionaires and there would be considerably fewer first playwrights.

Theatrical Godfather

In my salad days, I was lucky enough to have as my earliest theatrical godfather Mr. W. B. Yeats, a manager of impeccable taste, with a very strict canon of what may or may not be done. His criticism of my first play fell into two parts: first, that the scenes were too long; and, second, that there were too many scenes. After some fruitless attempts to cope with his comment, which meant in other words that he simply didn't like it at all, I took the bit between my teeth by increasing the number of scenes and making them all longer. To my great surprise he was charmed, and promised me £50 if I would have the play presented elsewhere.

Charmed or not, that was the result that it produced, and I attribute it to the fact that most of the things that seem important to a young author, and which he is almost invariably asked to cut out, much to his annoyance, are things that should not be cut out but should be done better. The fact of the matter is that the only really sound criticism you can get for your play is to sit unknown in the middle of an audience and watch the faces round you, and then circulate in the lobby in the intervals—usually a most unpleasant experience; but it brings up the next question that I would like to discuss with you.

Ought one to allow one's play to be done by anybody? Or ought one to insist on waiting for the best possible cast and producer? An agent will usually tell you the latter. 'Don't throw your play down the drain', he'll say, 'by allowing it to be wrecked by reps. and the amateurs. Time enough to allow them to get their fingers on it after it's been shown at its best in the West End'. I am sure this is sound advice and that there's a lot to it. All I would say is that if you stick firmly to this line you are going to miss an awful lot of fun, besides taking twice as long to learn your job. To my mind, a play is far too tenuous a thing to be constructed in the privacy of one's study. Maybe a dramatist with enormous experience, like Shaw, could visualise what would happen when a particular line was spoken by a particular actor on the stage, but it is certainly beyond me. I see a play as a living, growing thing that only acquires limbs from its performers, and only learns sense from its audiences. That is why, for me at any rate, some performance, any performance, even by amateurs, is better than no performance, provided I can go and see it: that is, until the script has taken its final shape.

Finding the Best Formula

Some people will tell you to write quickly, and, if it doesn't come off, to scrap it and write another play altogether; and there is a lot to be said for this advice, too, because it is based on the sound idea that if a play is badly constructed you will never get it right by fiddling with the dialogue. In my case, it is not with the dialogue that I want to fiddle; as a rule my dialogue is not bad; it is the construction that is terrible. And construction is something that can only be remedied by seeing what happens and experiencing where it is wrong. So, with any play that I know has stuff in it that is worth the effort, I will write it and have it produced, and then write it again, and so on until finally the best formula of presentation is found. Then, of course, it ceases to be interesting.

This is contrary to all the rules; so I am rather shy about offering
(continued on page 308)

NEWS DIARY

August 22-28

Wednesday, August 22

Governor of Cyprus announces surrender terms for terrorists

Mr. Stassen withdraws his opposition to Mr. Nixon as Republican candidate for the U.S. Vice-presidency

Twenty-third Radio Show opens in London

Thursday, August 23

Suez conference ends. Committee of five appointed to place proposals on Canal before Egypt

Terrorists in Cyprus reject Government's surrender terms

Standard Motor Company to introduce a three-day week in their car plant and to dismiss 1,000 workers

Report published of Court of Inquiry into dispute between maintenance men and employers in steel industry

Mr. Eisenhower accepts nomination as Republican Party presidential candidate

Friday, August 24

Suez Canal Committee holds first meeting. Mr. Menzies, its chairman, sends invitation to President Nasser to meet the committee

Committee set up in the Netherlands to investigate reports about private life of Queen Juliana and Prince Bernhard publishes statement

Dr. Otto John, former head of the Federal German Security Organisation, charged with high treason

Saturday, August 25

Mr. Abdulgani, Indonesian Foreign Minister, on his way home from Suez conference, has meeting with President Nasser in Cairo

Security forces in Malaya kill second-in-command of the terrorists

Sunday, August 26

It is announced that documents found in Cyprus recently contain 'irrefutable proof' that Archbishop Makarios was the leader of the terrorist campaign in the island

Egyptian Government expels three more British newspaper correspondents

Suez Canal Company says it can no longer be responsible for the safety of its staff

Monday, August 27

Egyptian security police arrest two Britons on charges of spying

Clydeside shipbuilding employers reject claim by 3,000 craftsmen for guaranteed minimum rates of pay

Tuesday, August 28

President Nasser accepts invitation to meet Suez committee

Mayor of Nicosia confined in his house after search by security forces



The members of the Suez Canal Committee photographed before their first meeting in London on August 24. Left to right: Mr. J. Foster Dulles (U.S.A.); Mr. R. Menzies (Australia), chairman; Mr. G. Hagglof (Sweden); Mr. A. Habtewold (Ethiopia); and Mr. A. G. Ardalan (Persia). President Nasser has accepted the invitation to meet the committee, to discuss proposals for the control of the Canal put forward by the London conference

The body of
lying in stat



A view of the flooding caused by heavy rains last week in the Zillertal, eastern Tyrol, a popular holiday area. Muddy water is seen covering the valley from Oders to Zell am Ziller. Six people have lost their lives there. Gales and storms have also caused damage and casualties in Germany and Switzerland, as well as in Britain

Right: work being carried out on the clockface of Big Ben. The overhaul of the tower is now well under way, and it is expected that the clock will be in operation again by the end of the year



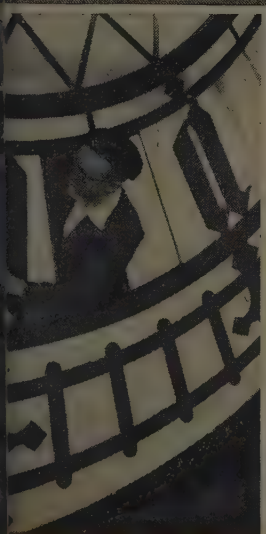
Roman Catholic Archbishop of Westminster, who died on August 20, Cathedral Hall last Sunday. About 50,000 people filed past the coffin two days' vigil. The funeral took place on August 28



The raft 'L'Egaré II', on which three French Canadians crossed the Atlantic, photographed at Falmouth, Cornwall, on August 22. The men, Henri Beaudot, Marc Modena (in check shirts) and Gaston Vanackere, made the journey from Halifax, Nova Scotia, in eighty-eight days, drifting with the Gulf Stream. When their food ran out, they lived chiefly on fish and rainwater



Denis Compton batting during England's first innings in the final Test match against the Australians at the Oval last week. He made 94. This was Compton's first appearance in Test cricket since the operation on his knee last November. Rain stopped play soon after lunch on Saturday and prevented any play on Monday. The result was a draw. England retains the Ashes



'The Unicorn of Scotland', one of the ten stone replicas of the Queen's Beasts which are being erected in Kew Gardens. They have been carved by James Woodford who modelled the original plaster figures for the Coronation annexe at Westminster Abbey

Left: a music-room in a miniature eighteenth-century house which is on view in an exhibition of Cotswold crafts at Burford, Oxfordshire. Every detail of the fittings in the house has been carried out by local craftsmen

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it as advice to anybody. But this I will say, that as a practice it has two fascinating things about it for the author. First of all, I enjoy seeing a play growing up on the stage over a succession of productions; one kind of approach here, and another kind there, with one part perhaps mishandled in this place, and suddenly, like that simple miracle, one's first riding of a bicycle, being played brilliantly somewhere else. I don't know whether you agree with me, but I feel that a play which has finally finished its education ceases, like a child, to be of quite the same interest to its parents. It has now a life of its own and so one has to wave it goodbye. But until that point is reached, as the song says, it may be a headache but it's never a bore. Every production, notwithstanding the howls of pain from one's agent, is a new and exciting experience.

The other curious thing that I found to be true, and that to some extent answers the agents, is the surprising discovery that if an author does not choose to take 'no' for an answer in the theatre, there is no real need for him to do so. Bad notices in the West End or on Broadway are popularly supposed to mean death. But this is only a very temporary truth. A resolute play that is about something, and has a proprietor who believes in it enough to repair its deficiencies, will usually make a come-back, even if it has to do with a new plot, which, after all, is usually the least important thing about it. Plots are the things that hardly any plays have these days, so there is not much competition.

But what happens to these plays in the meantime? This brings me to my final subject. Where can modern-experimental plays be tried out

today, in default of Broadway or the West End where the overheads are so enormous that no manager can really be expected to take a chance? Apart from the reps.—few of which can be strongly recommended as a try-out—there are the London try-out theatres themselves, and the so-called 'off Broadway groups'. Of these, the London ones are the best because they usually have better companies. Second-rank acting in America is of noticeably lower quality than second-rank acting in England. Then, from the author's point of view, there is the question of an Irish production. This has a great advantage about it. Unless he is of such ready-made fame that it will bring the London critics over to see his play, a production in Ireland—and there are plenty of excellent managers to put on a play—whether brilliant or disastrous, will neither do him any good elsewhere, nor do him any harm. In other words, it is the ideal place for him to see for himself, to learn from what he sees and then to repair.

The same isn't true of Broadway. A flop there is a flop. But there are scattered thinly in those enormous United States four or five little theatres of the kind where he can get a try-out. But, apart from these small American theatres, your best chance for a good experimental production in the United States is in one of the college theatres: Yale, North Western, Amherst, Smith, or the Polytechnic—there are plenty of them. Don't be afraid of these. I have seen more than one new play put on in one of these colleges that has subsequently been wrecked by bad production on Broadway.

But, as I said before, no play can really be wrecked wherever it is performed, if you, the author, are determined that it's good; and if you are right.—*Home Service*

Fair Trade or Restrictive Practice?—III

Level Tendering

By IAN BOWEN

THE basic idea of the system commonly employed in England and Wales for letting building contracts is simple. If you want a job done, say a garage built, you as the so-called 'building owner', the person for whom the building is to be constructed, and to whom the bill for its construction will eventually be sent, will ask a number of builders to study your precise requirements and to quote a price for the job. If you are satisfied on several points—for instance, that all the builders whom you approach will provide a garage according to your specifications, and by the time you want it—you choose the builder offering the lowest price. For some reason, you may not choose the absolutely lowest price offered, but more likely the lowest of those offered by builders who you think can give satisfactory results from all points of view. The basic idea, then, is for the owner to ask builders to compete, to compare their offers, and to buy in the genuinely cheapest market.

But not all building owners are private individuals. Many of them are firms, or government departments or local authorities; indeed, in recent years 75 per cent. of new building has been financed out of public money, directly or indirectly. The officials who have to recommend, to their board or their housing committee, which of a number of builders' bids should be accepted are often in a much more restricted position than the private individual building a garage, who is virtually responsible only to himself. Yet even with public authorities the same simple idea is often followed. The authorities try to get the best price by encouraging builders to compete with each other by open tendering.

To take an example, the architect of a local authority may receive in his office perhaps ten bids for a particular job. If there was genuine competition in this instance, the lowest bid put in may well be at a figure which, in the architect's private but highly competent judgement, will not allow the builder to do the job properly and make a profit. So if this particular bid is accepted, he, the architect, is going to be faced with a specially difficult contract, since the builder may try to skimp the job either in labour, supervision, quality of sub-contracting work done, or in quality of materials. Left to himself the architect might choose some other builder. But he does not care to recommend the acceptance of a higher bid. Administrative controls may even forbid such a recommendation. Even where these are not enforced, he risks a rebuff from

his controlling committee if he makes any such recommendation. He runs the risk of insulting innuendoes as to his financial relations with the builders.

So public authorities in particular often play safe, or what seems to be safe, and accept the lowest bid, rather than choose the builder who, on price combined with other factors, such as reliability, is judged to be the best for the job. Indeed, the Ministry of Housing and Local Government has officially instructed local authorities letting contracts for houses in the following terms:

'The principles of competitive tendering by open advertisement should be followed as closely as possible, and that the rule requiring acceptance of the lowest tender should be relaxed only on those occasions where a Local Authority, or . . . the Ministry itself, is satisfied that it would be a mistake to accept the lowest'. The Ministry of Education, it should be noted, has not followed the same practice since 1945. Indeed, it has officially stated its view that 'the open advertisement of contracts is not appropriate in present conditions, and in various ways Authorities have been encouraged to adopt a system of selective tendering'.*

How does a builder, whom we will call Mr. Jones, look at this situation? I think that, if we put ourselves in his place, we should see the matter somewhat like this. First, we should recognise and accept as a fact of life a considerable degree of competition between our own firm and the scores of thousands of other building firms in the country. If asked to put in a price for a job, we would not expect, save in very exceptional circumstances, to be the only firm asked to tender. Any client would be foolish who did not get in more than one offer. We expect some competition from other firms. But, naturally, we do not want to have to fight as though our lives depended on it for every contract that we secure. We, the Jones firm, expect to have earned some trading goodwill already. Indeed, just because there are so many thousands of firms 'competing' in the industry, we look at least to custom, usage, good sense, an unwritten rule, or whatever it may be to restrict the severity of the competition in any particular instance. Or we may look to protection in some form of price-ring organisation.

If he decides that the conditions of the competition are fair, Mr. Jones will be prepared to put in some bid, competitive or otherwise; in

* These quotations are from the Report on the Supply of Buildings in the Greater London Area. H.M. Stationery Office, 1954: a report of the Monopolies and Restrictive Practices Commission, pages 12-13

he is strongly biased in favour of doing so, even where he is new about getting the contract, because of another unwritten rule of custom of the industry, which is that you as a builder lose some of architect's goodwill if you refuse to bid on request.

Having decided to bid, Mr. Jones is faced with the question, secondly, how high to bid. The layman might think that the answer to this question could be objectively determined by an assessment of costs, and in part, it can. But the problem of overheads is complicated for Mr. Jones by the changing conditions of his market. In lean times he may have to cut his margin over costs very low, or, in the extreme case, hold his organisation together, he may even 'buy' one or two contracts—that is, undertake them deliberately at a loss. In good times he may therefore want to make a higher than average return to compensate for these losses. But who is wise enough to know the future? How can he tell at all accurately what losses he must offset by anticipation? So he has a serious decision to make. Should he bid high or bid low? And there are immediate, as well as long-term, issues involved. If he bids too high, will he lose the contract? If he bids too low, will he get it at a price insufficient for contingencies if they arise?

Drawbacks of Simple Competition

In other words, from the builders' point of view, the firm attachment of many building owners to a simple theory of competition has many drawbacks. There are two main troubles—the cost of tendering, and the risk of being forced by extreme competition to cut prices too low. Various groups of builders have from time to time organised themselves to counter these difficulties by such means as the device known as 'level tendering'. What justification is there in the mind of a builder for adopting such practices? *Prima facie* these entail a collusion which must run counter to the interests of his clients. Builders often argue that, in the long run, costs of tendering must be borne by the building owner; if a builder puts in tenders for three contracts, but fails to get them, and if he gets, on average, the fourth, will presumably include in the price of the fourth a sufficient profit margin to cover the cost of the three unsuccessful bids. So the tendering costs incurred on jobs A, B, and C entered for unsuccessfully might be paid for out of the gross trading profit on contract D, which the particular builder won. Some rationalisation schemes purport to end this, and to charge instead, by means of a levy or some pooling device, the tendering costs of contract A to contract A, and those of B to contract B and so on.

The second trouble is the so-called excessive competition. This notion usually takes the form of a statement blaming small, or, in part, builders for a decline in the quality of building work done. This 'excessive' competition is also from time to time called 'economic' and 'unfair'. The grounds for this are really, when traced down from the lengthy apologies which builders have indulged in on the subject, qualitative, the commonly quoted *cliché* being that 'you can't get a Rolls-Royce for the price of a Ford'. Excessive competition is unsound, so the builders allege, because the building owner is misled into false comparisons, imagining in error that he will get as good a building from the Ford car producer as he will from the Rolls-Royce producer; and there is a further implication, namely that the Rolls-Royce man will be tempted to reduce workmanship standards in order to produce an article nearer to the Ford's class. (Incidentally, the use of motor-car names in the analogy somewhat dates the age of builders using it or of the argument itself.)

'Cover Price'

Builders have from time to time tried to reduce this competition—by eliminating it, since they have no desire to build a comprehensive monopoly. One simple device for reducing competition, almost to the vanishing point if necessary, is what is known as the 'cover price'. In its extreme form, the cover price can be a method of organisation whereby a close ring of builders, sharing out all the jobs between them. It happens is that our Mr. Jones, asked for a bid, gets in touch with other competitors; they agree between themselves who will get the contract, and all but the one assigned the job put in 'cover prices', that is, bids ten per cent. or more above the lowest bid, the level of the lowest bid being known in advance. The object of this device is to raise the lowest bid considerably above what it would have been if the losers had not merely 'covered' the price; it also cuts down the necessity of more than one builder pricing out the contract in this form, that is, the tight ring or local monopoly, cover

prices have usually been condemned by spokesmen for the building industry as heavily as by owners.

But there are other ways of working a cover price system. Mr. Jones may not wish to compete with Mr. Smith; there may be no tight ring or monopoly for mutual interest but merely an understanding operated for one contract only—and in Jones' interest rather than Smith's. Jones will ring Smith and ask at what price he should 'cover' a particular contract. It is a peculiar system. Rather than refuse to compete openly, good will is preserved by avoidance of competition through conspiracy against the owner. Jones wants to price himself 'politely' out of the running. That this can be done is a consequence of the customs observed in the industry. Another custom which helps to maintain the cover price system is the secrecy of the documents used in contract-bidding. Customarily the detailed priced bills of quantities are returned to unsuccessful bidders unopened, so normally if tendering has not been based on properly priced bills of quantities, this does not come to light. If the bids are opened, as sometimes happens, they may be seen to be based on nothing at all but collusive arrangement.

There are several different methods, besides that of covering a price, whereby Mr. Jones can arrange with his fellow-builders to appear to compete while not genuinely competing; all these ways are open to a fundamental objection, so long as they are not publicly disclosed and controlled in some way—and that is, that the builders set themselves up to be judges in their own cause. So long as the proceedings are secret, and the obligation to produce a high quality building purely personal, Mr. Jones can hardly claim that efficiency is secured by competition, and at the same time enter arrangements to stifle competition. What the builders have really done—by their actions, not their words—is to query the effectiveness of a competitive tendering system.

Ministry of Education's Success

The Ministry of Health (later of Housing), with its competitive tendering, has not been nearly so successful since 1946 as the Ministry of Education; this can now be plainly seen, and is confirmed by the much greater interest shown by foreign architects in our publicly financed school buildings than in the majority of our post-war housing estates. Neither have costs been kept down, nor quality guaranteed, by competitive tendering. It would seem that selective tendering, and the nomination by architects of suitable contractors to do particular jobs of work, are methods that work better than normal competitive bids.

If you want a suit of clothes you might ask different tailors to quote for you, and take the lowest offer, but the method seems a trifle unreliable. If you really want similarly to build a garage cheaply it may be that you will be well advised to make careful enquiries as to the most reliable builder in your neighbourhood, and tell him that he can have the contract if your architect recommends that his price for the job is reasonable. But if this method is to be used on the large scale, builders will have to be prepared to see many changes made in the present legal and customary restrictions on the information publicly made known of the cost and progress of works actually performed. If nominated contracting and selective tendering are to grow, building owners have a right to scan the recorded performance which the builders have put up in recent years not only for themselves but for other owners as well. But as things are at present there seems no chance at all of reform along these lines. The deep-rooted practices of the industry have so far not been radically modified, despite a whole series of working party and committee reports.

My own view is that the builders have a case when they complain that fully competitive tendering would have adverse effects first on the builders' profits, and secondly on the efficiency of their work. But I cannot accept their corollary, which asserts that level tendering, or some other form of organised collusion over tendering, will, by raising contractors' profits, guarantee greater efficiency. On the contrary, I believe that the various devices of collusion have been a dangerous form of drug, and are harmful to builders and to building owners as well. By making a so-called competitive system tolerable for the builder, these devices have put off the day when the whole basis of tendering might be re-examined. Moreover, the official committees which have reviewed the collusive arrangements practised by the building industry have condemned these practices as clearly contrary to the public interest. The new legislation on restrictive practices may bring some of these practices to light, but will, in itself, hardly suffice to abolish them, still less to promote an alternative means of rendering so-called competition workable.—*Third Programme*

Miseries and Splendours of Clothes

By DONALD BOYD

SMALL boys running about the streets of the city of Leeds early in the century had a word in the dialect of the district for anything that was brilliant: 'It's spiffing' we would say. Reading the diary of Stendhal, I found a passage about new clothes and the pleasure they gave him. He went out, just before noon, he says, wearing a new suit of light cloth, cinnamon-bronze in colour. Like many of us, he did not often feel himself a success, but here he is, on a sunny day, in his new clothes. He loves himself; he loves everybody. He feels spiffing.

But this is going too deep for the boy in the photograph. He is half reclining against an artificial stone balustrade. He wears



'I remember the excitement I had in my first sailor suit'

a Scotch bonnet with tails, a kilt of Hunting Stewart, a sporran, and a coat with large pearl buttons. He has an expression of innocent surprise. I recognise at least the clothes, for they were mine, and I was proud of them. I was about six, the year 1901. It was not at all odd

that they were Highland. The name certainly was Boyd, which might authorise the use of the tartan, but the fashion went far beyond Scottish families. And my outfit was only the first of several in this style. But in the end I began to be a little self-conscious about Highland dress, and pleased when I could graduate into another fashion, for I remember the excitement I had in my first sailor suit.

And with this sailor suit my recollections of pleasure in new suits end, for a long time. I was coming to the awkward age; and in my day, the awkward age was dressed in awkward clothes. How much misery I have endured from my clothes! I often comforted myself with a line from Julius Caesar, which explains that new clothes cleave not to their mould without the aid of use. It always made me a little more hopeful.

Few garments can ever have been so hideous or so uncomfortable as those called Eton suits. In my life they were used on Sundays, or speech days, or formal occasions. The jacket was short and pointed behind. It did not cover the waist. The trousers were darkly striped. The collar was something like a short cape of starched linen which fitted over the waistcoat and the jacket collar, and therefore its upper edge was pushed well up into the throat while its lower edge exasperated the collar bone. A stringy black tie was somehow wedged into this contraption before it was put on. The tie would often fall off the rim of the collar and begin a strangling operation of its own. The front stud would be displayed. Parents would be cross; the boy miserable and sulky.

Weekdays were not much happier, for the Eton collar was still proper wear. I wore long trousers and a Norfolk jacket. It seemed to be a virtue then to use as much cloth as possible in a suit, and it was heavy cloth, too. The Norfolk jacket had broad pleats coming down from the collar bone to the hem, and concealed in those pleats were side pockets. The jacket also had a cloth belt, sewn on the back, and buttoned in front. With these clothes or similar ones, at that time, boys could wear four sorts of head covering. The most common was an ordinary cap with a peak, often of blue serge. The top was made in segments which united under a button on the crown of the head. Or you could wear a pill box of blue serge. It had neither brim nor peak, and this cap was rather vulgar. Third, a school cap with stitched emblem or silver badge upon it. And, last, a hard straw hat. I can find nothing good to say about the straw hat. It is rigid and therefore

un-fitting. You cannot put your head in it. It is hot. It disapproves rain, and is highly responsive to wind. It won't hang up and can't be packed. I say no more about the hard straw hat, the Benjy. I hat my straw hat.

One's ambitions in the way of clothing are a matter of conceit. To live up to one's ambitions was difficult. My ambition was called Maurice. I was not fond of him. I daresay I hated him. But I could admire him. I thought he was an accomplished man of the world, in fact, a 'knot'. I remarked to him that our hairdresser, Mr. de Lacy, had cut my hair with special scissors in a funny way. 'You fool said Maurice, 'that is trimming'. Maurice had soft and docile hair which he parted in the middle. My hair was feathery and obstinate, and the parting came naturally on the right, the unusual side. It was in unconscious imitation of Maurice that one evening when we were having a party, I stole upstairs, and plastered my hair with a large quantity of my father's *Pomade Hongroise*, and returned to the drawing room with my hair parted in the middle, but still mutinous, and visibly rising. My mother gave an audible gasp and said in a loud firm voice 'What have you done to yourself? Go and put it straight at once.'

The only thing I accomplished which I believed was at any rate partial success was to buy for myself a purple tie and a pair of purple socks. Trousers were narrow and kept well above the ankle. When I wore my purple socks my trousers were hoisted pretty high, and was clear what I was wearing, and older friends meeting me upon Saturday morning on The Grove, might say: 'What a fine colour your socks are, and I see you've been clever enough to get a tie that matches them. Very smart'. But they were being kind to a boy who obviously was never going to be smart in that sense; and secretly I knew myself. The socks and the tie were an advertisement of failure: how can you tell a boy that he must look elsewhere for the pleasure that Stendhal describes—the pleasure that 'makes you enjoy yourself with other people'?

My father worked on Saturday mornings, but he had been at leisure he would probably have worn a flannel suit. Not one of our dull, modern flannels of solid tone, but a beautiful, thick, soft flannel, with a lot of light blue in it. He would also have worn a hard straw hat, for to him the symbol was more than comfort.

My grandfather scarcely varied his costume, which was firmly old-fashioned. Beneath, he wore a thin flannel shirt, and over it a thing which was a collar and a 'dickie' (a false shirt-front) in one. He used a made-up black tie which was fastened by a strap to the collar. His outer garment was a full-bottomed, dark green cut-away coat with pockets in the tails, in which he would carry boxes of sweets for his grandchildren, and an enormous handkerchief which occasionally he would dust his enormous boots, much to his grandmother's annoyance. In so doing it was likely that his starched cuffs, which were loose, would drop out of his sleeves; and he had a trick, which amused us, of suddenly shooting his cuffs right off his hands. He was large, fat, and vigorous, and had a ginger beard which curled crisply round his chin.

His hat was a tall, square-sided black felt, and he carried a heavy stick. In those days country clothes could be flannels, blazers and straw hats, or they could be Harris tweed which then smelled of China tea: a belted jacket with patch pockets and trousers which fell a little below the knee and were fastened there



'Few garments can ever have been so hideous or so uncomfortable as those called Eton suits'



'Long trousers and a Norfolk jacket'

with box cloth and buttons, probably of transparent red horn. They were knickerbockers, a style of trousers which have been worn in Britain and in Europe for hundreds of years, and at last decayed into 'plus fours'. Stockings were plain and finished under the fastening of the trousers, and then fancy tops came in which were gartered outside the box cloth and offered a little fantasy. Boys of my age would wear what were called 'cycling trousers'. They were something like riding breeches, but tapered indecisively from the hips to the knees, where they were often laced. When my friend John had a whole cycling suit made of Donegal tweed, with fancy stockings and cap to match, we were dumb-struck, and could not leave the subject alone, for we suspected the worst, that he was making a roundabout approach to some young woman; and John being older and bigger than we were, and not less sensitive, lost his temper, and wheeled across the road in front of us, red in the face, and, raising a fist to the air, shouted: 'You'd better shut up now—I've had enough about my suit—shut up'. So we shut up. But we were right. We lost him.

I suppose we were all, often, overdressed. We seemed to have to fight against harsh, thick clothes. Who, of my generation, will forget the perpetual irritation of thick woollen vests and pants? But I was luckier than most, I think, and not always overheated. And at the seaside I could indulge myself in a cricket shirt and my school blazer, which was Turkey red with green binding; and with it I wore one of those red, stockinet caps, long and tasselled, which were worn then by the fishermen and lifeboatmen of the east coast of Yorkshire.

There was a wide choice of hats. Most males did wear hats, though there were the men known as the 'No-hat brigade'. For walking or cycling most people of ostentatious habits would wear an ordinary small flat cap. But my father preferred a tweed hat with a crown like a pudding basin and a round, stitched brim. I also, when I grew older, liked this sort of hat, and gave up wearing one only when my youngest

brother, in the late nineteen-forties, told me harshly how humiliated it made him feel to think I might be going about in it, even out of his sight. But I excuse him. He was born not long before 1914 and does not belong to my period at all. He does not understand about tweed hats of that sort. They are both symbolic and practical. They keep the head warm and dry, they shade the eyes. They can be rolled up and stuffed in a pocket. They are indestructible. On a cold day, when you need to sit on a rock on the top of a fell, a tweed hat makes a good cushion and guards you against that 'distressing and almost universal complaint' which you get from sitting on cold stone or wet timber.

Yes, with the end of the 1914 war it seemed that all the late Victorian and Edwardian fashions died—tall hats, frock coats, full-bottomed coats, Norfolk jackets, straw Benjys, long skirts, narrow trousers, boots, Eton collars. They were to be replaced by new fashions. I was amazed in the early nineteen-twenties to see a smart friend of mine wearing, in the town, a garment I had never seen before. It was what we now call a jumper. It was of pearly grey wool with a 'V' neck, and promised such comfort (and novelty) that as soon as I could I bought one myself. Advanced young men wore 'Oxford bags' which were as wide and long as mine had been tight and short; and with them tweed ties and umbrellas. The openings of lounge jackets sank to the navel. Stiff collars almost disappeared.

It seemed, I say, that late Victorian and Edwardian fashions were dead, but it is an amusement to see them return. I shall never, thank goodness, wear an Eton collar again or a straw Benjy, and I think I shall refuse to wear a Norfolk jacket though I see they are returning to fashion. And woollen underwear still makes me cringe. But other Edwardian touches return comfortably. Jackets have acquired that uprightness and buttoned-upness which belong to the old time—to my time. The modern cap is again small, as it was in my adolescence. So perhaps after all, I say to myself, we were not really so eccentric.

—Home Service

Pygmalion's Frenzy

RANDOLPH QUIRK on our attitudes towards spoken English

IF we were asked what the main function of language was, our immediate answer would probably be: 'To express our thoughts'.

But a moment's reflection might prompt a more cynical reply.

Both Voltaire and Oliver Goldsmith pointed out that language is also used to *conceal* our thoughts, and the Danish philosopher Kierkegaard went one better than this: he said that language also operates to conceal the fact that we have no thoughts. Language has, in fact, many functions—among them (praise be) the provision of a job for linguists.

Recently great attention has been given, to another function—the notion of language as a social activity—and here we come to something really fundamental. Language as a social activity, a part of man's behaviour in relation to society, rather as his table-manners and his choice of dress are. Our table-manners, the way we eat particular dishes, are not determined primarily by desire to get the food into our mouths in the quickest and most efficient way. If they were, the time-and-motion people would soon effect a révolution in our eating habits. Our table-manners are part of our conforming to the social conventions of those around us. So, too, in our choice of clothes, we do not think only of keeping warm or cool, but of the conventions of our particular society. With our language habits as well, it is a matter of conforming to our environment—in the greetings we use, the grammatical distinctions we observe, and the taboo words and expressions we suppress. By conforming in these things we show we are really part and parcel of our social group.

All of us at some time have experienced fear over our table-manners or our dress: the sudden alarm as to how one manipulates asparagus, or what to wear at some garden-party. Yet the total system of conventions for eating or dressing is simple as compared with the delicate complexity of language conventions; so it is not to be wondered at that doubts can arise much more frequently over our choice of linguistic forms. It is all right so long as we are moving within the familiar home circle, or with close friends: even Cabinet Ministers have their opportunities for collar-loosening, or speaking without the

fear of what it will look like in *Hansard*. But even at home we feel certain tugs of restraint: there are things men might say before men friends but not with their womenfolk around; and there are things we should not say in front of the children—but often remember too late.

But once we are outside our familiar circle, the things we have to be careful about are far more numerous: and the further our activities carry us among people fairly far removed from the background we are used to, the more careful we have to be, not only with our dress and table-manners, but also our speech. In fact among the English-speaking peoples the position may be more serious than it is with others, through the real (though probably declining) consciousness of what we might call a 'class-dialect', which has great prestige throughout the world: the kind of English identified, more or less vaguely, with the public schools. And the existence of this class-dialect is only one aspect of the many ways in which English serves as a badge or barrier (depending which way you look at it). The new boy at school feels out of it at first because he does not know the right names for things, and sophisticated pundits of six and seven look down on him for not knowing that 'racksy' means dilapidated, and that 'hairy' means out-first-ball. The miner feels superior to the visitor or novice who calls the cage a 'lift' and who thinks that men working in a warm seam are in their underpants when anyone ought to know the garments are called 'hoggies'. The sailor has mild contempt for the landlubber who calls the companionway the 'stairs'. And, apart from specialised jargons of this sort, there are all kinds of standards of correctness that most of us find ourselves aiming at because we are vaguely aware that certain kinds of English invite irritation or condemnation, while others (for instance, each year's crop of 'O.K. words', like 'discrete', 'texture', 'authentic') convey some kind of prestige.

This acute awareness of language differences could be seen in the recent excitement over Professor Ross's 'U' and 'Non-U', and it can be seen daily in the correspondence columns of our newspapers. One man recently fulminated against the use, by otherwise decently spoken folk, of the word 'guts' for courage. 'Sir', writes another,

'The word *lay-by* instead of the well-established *siding* is a dreadful term. Who is responsible for this atrocity?' Strong language to use about language, isn't it, to call a word an 'atrocity'? It is a symptom of the almost religious awe that we feel towards language, which can be seen at its strongest in verbal charms for healing, and in libel actions; as Mr. Ogden has reminded us, 'word-magic' is by no means dead or restricted to African witch-doctors: everyone is apt to feel strongly about words. A recent spate of letters condemned newly formed verbs like 'dieselise' (used of dieselising the railways), and 'hospitalise' (used of entrusting someone to hospital care). Within the last few months, a well-known writer has publicly criticised a high appointment because the man selected had once been guilty of using the expression 'those kind of'. A favourite whipping-post is, of course, the Americanism. Dickens, in *Martin Chuzzlewit*, sneered at the American predilection for using words like 'location', and although the fashion for ridiculing Americanisms has declined in the last few years, there are still few topics that can so unite us British as happily contemplating this linguistic evidence that we are not as other men are.

Fear of 'A Low Social Assessment'

You may have noticed that none of the objections to usage that I have cited involves the danger of misunderstanding: 'lay-by', 'dieselise', 'location', 'guts', 'those kind of', are as perfectly understood in their contexts as any substitutes would be. No: they are criticised for failing to meet certain aesthetic, logical, or social standards which the critics feel are desirable. This illustrates the naivety of supposing that we are interested in English only as a means of clear and direct communication. Even universally condemned forms like 'I know he done it, coz I seen him' communicate with complete clarity and immediacy. Even a statement like 'I didn't see nobody' gives rise to no misunderstanding, however much we have been taught about two negatives making a positive. So, too, with more refined points at issue, like 'Who did you give it to?', 'These kind of people', or 'Everyone must do their best', which in self-conscious speech are apt to become: 'To whom did you give it?', 'This kind of people', and 'Everyone must do his or her best'. In avoiding one set of forms and selecting the other set, the aim is not to be clearer or more direct, but to avoid a low social assessment.

An American professor once said that speakers of English fell into three groups: the assured, the anxious, and the indifferent. At the top end of the social scale, among people of position and secure social status, we find assurance; they are confident of speaking an unimpeachable form of English; no fear of being corrected or criticised is likely to cross their minds, and this gives their speech that characteristically laconic and easy flow which is often envied. Their nonchalant attitude to grammar is epitomised in the words of Bulwer Lytton: 'I am free to confess that I don't know grammar. Lady Blessington, do you know grammar?' At the other end of the social scale we have an equally imperturbable band, speaking with similar careless ease, because even if they are aware that their English is condemned by others, they are supremely indifferent to the fact. The Mrs. Mops of this world have active and efficient tongues in their heads, and if we do not happen to like their way of saying things, we can lump it: that is their attitude.

Then we have the in-betweens, a much less fortunate group: the anxious, who actively try to suppress what they believe to be bad English, and to cultivate what they hope to be good; who live their lives (at any-rate their public lives) in some degree of nervousness over their grammar, their pronunciation, and their choice of words; sensitive and fearful of betraying themselves. Keeping up with the Joneses is measured not only in housing, furniture, refrigerators, cars, and clothes, but also in speech. And the misfortune of the anxious does not end with their private anxiety, because their lot is also the open or veiled contempt of the assured on one side of them, and of the indifferent on the other. ('Cor, 'ark at 'er, going all lah-di-dah'). Anyone can get a laugh with an unworthy crack at what is called 'suburban English'—and I do say unworthy because few people deserve less to be sneered at. The folk thus uncomfortably stilted on linguistic high-heels so often form part of what is, in many ways, the most admirable section of our society: the ambitious, tense, inner-driven people, who are bent on going places and doing things. The greater pity, then, if a disproportionate amount of their energy goes into what has been called 'this shabby obsession' with variant forms of English—especially if the net result is just to sound affected and ridiculous, as it often is. Here is what was recently heard from two well-dressed young women: 'And Janet is going too', said one of them. 'Oh', said the other, with a

nervously perfect drawl, 'Janet whom?'—presumably betraying an anxiety to correct a tendency to say things like 'you saw who?'.

If one happens to be adept in language habits, it is possible to achieve an effortless bilingualism—that is, our native English plus an assumed form. But more often, a striving after a different form of English can be such a strain as to make us obviously more preoccupied with the 'how' of our utterances than with the 'what', too anxious to select the approved form of speech to be able to concentrate upon the content of what we are saying. 'Here', as Bacon said, 'is the first distemper of learning, when men study words and not matter. . . . seems to me that Pygmalion's frenzy is a good emblem . . . of that vanity: for words are but the images of matter; and except they have life of reason and invention, to fall in love with them is all one as to fall in love with a picture'.

We all know what Bernard Shaw made of the Pygmalion story, and there are many examples of the absurdity of being obsessed by outward linguistic forms. I have already mentioned taboo and word-magic, and Professor Clark of Minnesota tells the story of how a colleague mentioned to a girl student the fine litter of puppies just presented to him by his spaniel bitch, and found to his horror that he had reduced the girl to blushes. 'It's quite all right', she assured him, her confusion made worse by his concern, 'only I'm not used to hearing the word applied to dogs'. But, more often, the preoccupation with form just produces insipid conversation, drained of personality, overloaded with clichés and stock responses, for all that they are spoken in accent approved by the elocutionist and in phrases redolent of the grammar book. How infinitely preferable to this is talk that is lively and genuine in whatever city accent, and regardless of whatever school-book rules.

The trouble is that the anxious, for all their anxiety, persistently underestimate their task. As I have suggested, language is the most delicate index of our conformity with the social conventions of those around us. If we try to use it to indicate conformity with a society to which we do not belong, we are obviously on dangerous ground, and unless we are very skilled or very lucky its subtleties will prove too much for us.—*Home Service*

The Strange Harbour

Of me They take no heed,
Nor are concerned
With time's repetitive creed,
For Whom the stars have burned

To the cold nothingness of Light,
And the companioned earth
Though obedient to her Joy has yet
Given deathless birth.

To me They speak no word,
Offer no glance,
But I have seen the storm-driven bird
Shed his pitiful defiance

Entering this strange harbour;
And the fox die
With his deaf stare on some saviour;
Fellowed, eye to eye.

And sometimes in shallow midnight
Singing echoes singing—
Their summer sleep so light
Who spare me this spilled blessing.

The almost-deaf, am I;
The almost-blind;
Whose straining ear and eye,
Urgent with solitude, find

To regard them, none;
Yet hear and see
Infallible echo, reflection.
Gladness and comfort, by proxy.

FRANCES BELLERBY

Letters to the Editor

The Editor welcomes letters on broadcasting subjects or topics arising out of articles or talks printed in THE LISTENER but reserves the right to shorten letters for reasons of space

Letter to a Young Scientist

Sir,—I hope that the young scientist, 'John', will not believe Professor Frisch when he says (THE LISTENER, August 23):

You may refuse to work on atomic weapons just as you may refuse to carry a rifle; but unless a great many others do the same it will do no good, apart from salving your own conscience.

A belief that it was no good to take a personal stand against Jew-baiting, totalitarianism, Aryan supremacy, and the like, unless a great many others did the same, was the reason why there was so little opposition to Hitlerism in the nineteen-thirties on the part of the really decent people in Germany, of whom there were many. Dictators like Hitler and demagogues like McCarthy thrive on this belief, which is still the major hindrance to individual political action in face of threats to freedom or morality. Indeed, this rationalisation of inertia is one way of salving one's conscience at having avoided taking an unpopular or dangerous personal stand.

Sometimes a personal stand does succeed, beyond hope. The Rector of Göttingen University, who resigned fifteen months ago as a protest against the appointment of a neo-nazi Minister of Education, thought he was taking a lone stand. He did it because he felt that only so could he draw public attention to a political scandal. He found that he was supported not only by his own academic staff but also by a considerable body of world opinion, so much so that the appointment was annulled.

The men and women who died or who went to prison in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, rather than submit to laws restricting their freedom to worship as they felt right, were mostly unknown and unimportant people, and relatively few in number. Yet they laid the foundation of our religious freedom today. The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church.

To refuse to work on atomic weapons is not a particular hardship. It is not likely to involve a young scientist in martyrdom or even in unemployment. There are still plenty of jobs to be had elsewhere, especially in teaching.

It is also true that as long as war is tolerated as a means of settling international or national disputes there will be scientists who agree to be used as the tools of military policy. This does not alter the fact that if a young scientist believes that war is wrong or that the making and use of nuclear weapons is wrong, but allows himself to be persuaded into taking part in the production of them because of the supposed political ineffectiveness of a lone personal stand; he damns his own soul, and those who give him such evil advice help him to do it. He also puts off a little further the time when war will no longer be tolerated. Nor does the scientist who refuses to take part in research or production for military purposes thereby acquire a clean conscience. He is part of humanity and shares its guilt. Even he cannot unload all the responsibility on to the governments and the generals, as Professor Frisch seems to do. Or have I misunderstood him?

Yours, etc.,

West Drayton

KATHLEEN LONSDALE

St. Peter's Denial of Christ

Sir,—Mr. Bertram Henson's interpretation (THE LISTENER, August 23) seems to spring from a more rosy view of human nature than is

taken by the orthodox Christian. It may indeed be, as Mr. Henson suggests, that Peter's denial of Jesus was part of a fairly consistent carrying out by Peter of his Master's wishes; but it may equally well have come from a temporary loss of nerve. If we take the latter interpretation we remind ourselves of the fact of human insufficiency; and Christianity precisely is diagnosis of human insufficiency and a kind of a cure for it. If we take Mr. Henson's interpretation we play down the element of human insufficiency and so by-pass the need for a cure.

The last sentence of Mr. Henson's talk is significant:

What is bold to a point of scandal in the Christian belief is not that it invites credence in signs and wonders and disturbances of nature but in the audacity of the conviction that You and I and He hold within the grasp of our communion together all the creative purpose and power of the universe.

This is optimism indeed. Is it an answer to the human sense of weakness and failure? Mr. Henson's psychology goes less deep than does that of orthodox Christianity. Perhaps that is one reason why the latter has survived so long.

Yours, etc.,

Bangor

THOMAS MCPHERSON

Aspects of Africa

Sir,—In his talk entitled 'Africa and the Future' (THE LISTENER, July 26), Mr. Willem van Heerden says:

With the possible exception of one or two tiny stretches, no land in South Africa was ever conquered from the Bantu by force.

The lands in question include: in the Cape Province, most of the Ciskei, between the Fish and the Kei rivers, conquered piecemeal from Nguni tribes between 1818 and 1853; in Natal, over a quarter of Zululand, which was opened up to white settlement early this century following the defeat of the Zulus in 1879; in the Orange Free State, the land on the north-western side of the Caledon river which is still referred to as 'the conquered territory' and which comprises some of the best arable in the Union, conquered from the Basuto and allied tribes in the eighteen-fifties and eighteen-sixties; and most of the northern Transvaal, conquered from the Matabele in 1837.

Quite a 'tiny' stretch or two!

Yours, etc.,

Rondebosch, Cape

L. M. THOMPSON

The Net Book Agreement

Sir,—I would have expected Mr. Yamey (THE LISTENER, August 23) to make reference to conditions in the book trade in the United States: no price maintenance; inflated prices to enable publishers to give larger margins of profit to the retailer who can therefore pass on a slice to the customer; few really good bookshops. Is this what Mr. Yamey recommends?

Yours, etc.,

London, W.C.2

GERTI KVERGIC

Little Superstitions

Sir,—Your correspondent, Mr. John Ferguson, might push his surmises as to the blessing of the sneeze even farther back than to Apuleius. In the Babylonian epic of Gilgamesh it may be remembered that when Entil, his hairy twin, dies, Gilgamesh will not leave his side until he

sees the worms leaving his nostrils—i.e., until his spirit has safely departed.

Thus horror of the ghostly or spiritual essence of a person residing within the nostrils still remains embedded in the vulgar or dialect tongue in England today. In my childhood the common term for dried nasal mucus was 'a bogey'—a name, of course, identical with that of the bogeyman or ghost, and current dialect dictionaries show that this dual use of bogey or boggart is still widespread. The benison bestowed on the sneezer, therefore, seems rather due to the dangerous powers of the actual effluence from the nostrils than to fear of the sneezer's losing his soul.

Yours, etc.,

Birmingham, 13

BARBARA LOWE

Sir,—I quite agree with Mr. John Ferguson who stated in THE LISTENER of August 2, that 'the blessing [of a man who sneezed] was an indication of the fact that the person who sneezed was likely shortly to die'. The same thing obtains in Arabic. When a man sneezes we say, 'Yarhamkun Allah', 'May God have mercy on you', which phrase is used only in connection with the dead.

Yours, etc.,

Baghdad.

S. A. KHULUSI

The evolution of the world's postal services provide abundant scope for the administrative historian. In their more recent developments those services also furnish the publicist with themes for homilies. Whether Mr. Laurin Zilliacus is writing about them in the first capacity or the second is not always obvious, but in the main his book, *From Pillar to Post* (Heinemann, 15s.), is descriptive rather than persuasive. He traces the story of the posts from the origins of epistolary communication to the fortunes of the U.P.U. in the present century.

Inevitably the postal story does not fully unfold itself before the rise of the modern state. More specifically it begins with the organisation of government postal services within the dominions of Philip I of Spain by Franz Taxis. Leading figures of later times are Ralph Allen, who started the English by-posts, Rowland Hill, who invented the 'bit of paper . . . covered at the back with a glutinous wash', and Heinrich Stephen, who welded together the posts of the German Empire and later of the world. To Englishmen, Hill is naturally the most notable of these leaders. Nor is his interest for us confined to his services to the Post Office; for he is an excellent example of the hero of the administrative revolution in Great Britain.

In his role as homilist Mr. Zilliacus takes occasion to castigate excessive nationalism as a force retarding postal progress. He also dwells upon the beneficent process by which the post was transformed from a fiscal contrivance to a public service, put at the disposal of the poorest by drastic price-cutting. Would the managers of our newly nationalised industries but look into postal history they would come to appreciate, as did Victorian governments, the merits of progressively lowering rather than progressively raising the price of their wares. So bright and fluent a book as this one should make the lesson all the easier to assimilate.

Art

Braque in Edinburgh

By DAVID SYLVESTER

THERE is an appropriateness in the fact that the first major exhibition in Great Britain of Braque should have its initial showing in Edinburgh. Not because the best-known of Braque's sayings might have come out of the mouth of John Knox: 'I like the rule that corrects emotion'; but because the pictures look very much at home there. As one enters the first room of the exhibition at the R.S.A., finding oneself face to face with a series of paintings of the period 1909-11, one rediscovers, not without astonishment, the landscape outside.

I mean, of course, the view of the Old Town—a sequence of planes

of grey rock with some brown in it, planes with rectangular shapes mostly, piling up as the ridge is mounted, piling up steeply because the structure is very shallow in depth, almost as if it were compressed from behind. And this is precisely the conformation of one after another of the Braques, from the two views of the chateau at La Roche Guyon, painted in 1909, to the still life, 'Homage to J. S. Bach', painted in 1912. Not only the structure but the very colour is Edinburgh's. In the earlier works of the series, the rock-coloured shapes even rear up from a mass of green, like the buildings in the view from Princes Street. Then the green disappears, leaving only greys and browns such as one sees from Johnston Terrace. Nor does the resemblance exist only in the colour and the angularity and the steep piling-up

of the planes in a shallow space. The paintings have a light which is the misty light of the north. And their forms do not merely share the colour of rock: they have the quality, the feel, of rock.

I have gone on about this not because I have a thesis that Braque's heart is in the Highlands, but because the shock of recognition which I experienced on entering the exhibition made me aware of the extraordinary persistence in Braque's work of this period of the precipitous conformation I have described. It persists whether the ostensible subject be a landscape or a still life or a figure. And it is not found in Picasso's work of the period, in spite of the profound resemblance in other respects. It is a conformation that could be explained by the influence of Cézanne's views of Gardanne piling geometrically up the hillside. But why is it that in absorbing Cézanne's influence Braque acted as if this kind of Cézanne was the only kind he knew? Is it possible that Braque's obsession with this particular conformation is the relic of a childhood memory of Mont St. Michel, a spot not far from Le Havre, where he grew up?

This is groundless speculation. What is not speculation is that this particular obsessive conformation, with its rocky character and its element of the picturesque, bears witness to a profound romanticism, a romanticism which accords with the fact that Braque belongs to the north, was brought up there, and to this day has done must of his work there (his heart is at any rate nearer the Highlands than the

Mediterranean). He is a romantic in the brooding quality of his *fauve* paintings, which is found in no other *fauve* paintings. And he is a romantic in his power and his need to transform things and people into landscape—between 1909 and 1912 a landscape of rocks and of buildings piled on rocks, then, in the 'twenties, a landscape that is lush, pastoral, a landscape of rich green and earthy brown. Thus the great pair of monumental nudes carrying baskets on their heads are thick trunks of trees, and the flicks of green in the drapery round their legs are the moss and vegetation round the bases of trees.

The completion of these nudes in 1927 (they had been worked on

over a period of five years) marks the end of a phase in Braque's development. The palette now becomes lighter and more varied, the paint thinner and less sensuous. And here, I feel, Braque suffers a failure of the imagination. Until now he has been, it seems to me, a finer artist than Picasso—not only superior in his use of colour and handling of paint but with a more subtle and more totally convincing imagination. But at this point Picasso lets loose the first of a series of imaginative inventions—taking the form of paintings, sculptures, drawings, prints, poems—of great brilliance, force, and eloquence; Braque, in the meantime—and the meantime is a period of some fifteen years—is in the doldrums. The still-lives of this period are weak and mannered, seem to lack conviction: the rhythms have a life that



'The Studio II', 1949, by Georges Braque: from the exhibition at the Royal Scottish Academy, Edinburgh

has been too obviously worked for; the shapes are too 'shapely', with the air of stylisations, not of transformations.

But it is not an uncommon thing for a master, in his middle years, to go through a period of ten or even twenty years—we see it in Titian, we see it in Rembrandt—in which the imaginative pressure slackens, having lost the excitement of the early work without yet finding the wisdom of the late. And so it has been with Braque. In the light of the great series of 'Studios' which Braque has been working on through the last eight years (and of which there are two in the Edinburgh show), his paintings of the nineteen-thirties and early 'forties' can be seen as a gathering-together of his forces and resources in preparation for a great late period.

Recent writings by Braque (from which Douglas Cooper quotes extensively in the catalogue) make it clear that the 'Studios' are very much bound up with metaphysical ideas, about the reality of reality and so on. But then the analytical-cubist paintings also seem to touch on metaphysical questions. The achievement of the late works is that the metaphysical element is now reconciled with and enriched by the sensuousness of the paintings of the 'twenties, whereas earlier the presence of one of these elements tended to squeeze the other out. It is the marvellous fusion of the metaphysical and the sensuous that makes the late works what they are, as it often does the late works of the truly great painters.

The Listener's Book Chronicle

Science and Civilization in China.

Vol. 2. History of Scientific Thought

By Joseph Needham. Cambridge. 80s.

DR. NEEDHAM'S HEROIC enterprise, which was greeted with such well-deserved acclaim when his first volume appeared two years ago, has now reached its second stage. The new volume before us is nothing less than a re-examination of the whole history of Chinese thought from the point of view of its implications for the promotion or inhibition of scientific discovery. As we should expect, such a re-examination from such a new standpoint, when the examiner is a man of Dr. Needham's wide-ranging intellect, has produced countless new insights, not only into less well-known aspects of Chinese thought but also in the main fields that have been worked over by sinologists in the past. He has given us perhaps the best, certainly the most stimulating and exciting, general account of Chinese philosophy we possess.

That having been said it must be added that this volume contains a great deal of controversial matter. Perhaps just because the author is a man of strong philosophical interests and passionate concerns, we feel that all too often an argument which we would like, largely to accept is pushed too far; so that we have the exasperated feeling that the glass has suddenly distorted itself, revealing not a distant and unfamiliar civilisation but the author himself. We are easily won over by Dr. Needham's sympathy for Taoism and convinced that it was more conducive to the objective observation of nature than was Confucian humanitarian rationalism—though we feel rather uncomfortable at the way in which the ambivalence for the development of science of certain aspects of Taoism, such as the negative attitude to knowledge and the emphasis on 'knack' rather than explicitly formulated technique, is explained away. When he goes further and asks us to believe that the Taoist political myth was based on a substantial recollection of the primitive communism which according to Marxist mythology precedes the development of class society and the inauguration of history, we are more sceptical. No doubt previous translators have sometimes read their own preconceptions into that fascinating, enigmatic poem, the Tao Te Ching, but most people will probably feel that his is a fault even more evident in Hou Wai-lu's interpretation, which makes it sound like a modern political tract.

Again, it is easier to believe that there is a congruity between the main trend of Chinese thought about the universe, as expressed specially in Taoism and neo-Confucianism, and the modern 'philosophy of organism' as found, or instance, in Alfred North Whitehead, than to believe that western philosophy derived from China a 'deeply important stimulus' coming in the seventeenth century through Leibniz. One hopes that Dr. Needham's challenge will be taken up and that this question will be further investigated; but we would like to have more evidence and argument to show, on the one hand, that the stimulus Leibniz required was really so lacking in his European background and, on the other hand, that he could have had such a deep insight into Chinese philosophy, presented to him through the distorting mirror of Jesuit missionary preoccupations, as to be able to penetrate to its real spirit and not simply to see in it reflections of his own thought or ways of thinking with which he was familiar—as was largely true of Voltaire.

The thematic question throughout this volume is: Why did the Chinese, after getting as far as they did, not independently develop modern science? Dr. Needham's final answer will only come in the last volume on Social Background, but its main lines seem clear. The blame falls on the inhibiting factors imposed on Chinese society by its bureaucracy and dominant Confucian ideology. There is much force in this position, yet it seems to us that a strictly historical study, giving due importance to such factors as the more thorough breakdown of ancient society in the West and the effects of the Mongol conquest in the East, must join with sociological analysis before a satisfactory answer can be obtained.

Pierre-Joseph Proudhon

By George Woodcock. Routledge. 28s.

Proudhon, in Courbet's portrait, has not the aspect of a revolutionary; the broad, rugged, kindly face is that of a peasant. Professor Woodcock's interesting new biography confirms, as no other book about him does, the idea of Proudhon that Courbet gives. Proudhon, Professor Woodcock says, was more like William Cobbett than Karl Marx; and it is hard to disagree. Cobbett, assuredly, was no socialist; but then, when all is said and done, was Proudhon? He spoke of himself as one, and he has sometimes been called '*le père du socialisme français*'. And yet, although he was opposed to capitalism, he was equally opposed to any sort of nationalisation, state expropriation or control; and since the enlargement of the state, if only temporarily, is an essential part of all programmes now known as socialist, the word has plainly ceased to be the right one for Proudhon. 'Anarcho-syndicalist' is not a euphonious appellation, but it would describe him much more truly.

Professor Woodcock prefers more delicate words. He calls Proudhon a 'libertarian'. In doing so he betrays a disposition far removed from Proudhon's own. For it was Proudhon's way to select words which made his ideas sound much more shocking and devilish than they really were. To think of his name is to think of such startling apophthegms as 'Property is theft' or 'God is evil'. He always used the tactics of the sensational journalist, though his beliefs were often of the utmost subtlety.

He was born in Besançon on February 15, 1809. His parents were both of Franc-Comtois peasant stock, but they had done poorly on the land, and Proudhon himself chose at the age of eighteen to become a working printer. His flair for journalism was soon obvious, and he might easily have made a fortune as a writer in the service of others, had he not elected the harder path of independence and dissent. He was twenty-nine years old when he published his best-known book: *Qu'est-ce que la Propriété?* It was here that he wrote those famous words: '*La propriété c'est le vol*'. However, as Professor Woodcock points out, he did not mean this statement to be taken literally. What he wished to be understood by 'property' was what he later called 'the sum of its abuses'. He believed it was right that a man should own what he produced and wrong that a man should have what he produced taken from him by others. What he objected to was rent, interest, and usury; he was not opposed to property altogether.

Nor was he an atheist in the strict sense of that word. When he said 'God is evil' he was expressing a point of view much more akin to

that of Thomas Hardy than to that of Holbach or Marx. Proudhon was religious by nature; he had a deep sense of a presiding deity; but the condition of the world and humanity seemed to him to prove that the deity, far from being a loving one, was hostile—'anti-civilised, anti-liberal, anti-human'. He did not disbelieve in God, he hated God.

But he loved France. When his friends urged him to go into exile to avoid persecution, he said that he would rather be a manual labourer in France than a philosopher elsewhere. He did go for a time to Geneva, but he detested Switzerland, and voluntarily returned to serve a prison sentence in his native land. All his life he retained many of the patriarchal notions of the Franc-Comtois peasant, and was particularly opposed to such progressive ideas as women's emancipation. Even his persecutors respected him, and he was allowed to have considerable liberties in prison. His three years as a political prisoner between 1849 and 1852 were, in fact, among the most productive of his life. He edited three newspapers from his cell and wrote three books; and during his short spells of parole he married and founded a family.

Like many born journalists, Proudhon was incapable of writing an interesting text of more than a thousand words, and his so-called major works are unreadable. His influence in England has been negligible, nor could one expect the British people to be drawn to a theorist who offered them but two alternatives: '*l'anarchie ou le Césarisme*'. Spaniards, knowing little of a third way, were the most responsive of Proudhon's foreign followers. The anarchists of Catalonia who resisted both Franco and the Communists in the Spanish Civil War were Proudhon's last true disciples; and like him they were visionaries—proud, foolish, and incorruptible.

New Lines. An anthology edited by

Robert Conquest. Macmillan. 12s. 6d.

New Poems 1956. A P.E.N. anthology edited by Stephen Spender, Elizabeth

Jennings and Dannie Abse.

Michael Joseph. 12s. 6d.

MR. ROBERT CONQUEST in his introduction to *New Lines* (in a more militant literary era it might have been a manifesto) defines the poetry of the Wain-Amis-Davie school (these names are used as a portmanteau and are not exclusive) as 'empirical in its attitude to all that comes', with 'a reverence for the real person or event'. His essay is a clear and useful chart of a contemporary poetic movement, which the anthology itself aims at defining. The nine poets (including the editor) are each represented by a group of eight or more poems, some of which have already appeared in books of the individual poet's work, thus achieving by repetition something like standard reference status (e.g. Davie's 'Remembering the Thirties' and Amis' 'The Voice of Authority'). These, and others less familiar, are clear, witty and truthful poems, offering a tough, thought-out position stated in acceptable contemporary terms. That is the characteristic note of *New Lines*: a more romantic, Durrellish note is struck by the editor himself, while Thom Gunn is perhaps in danger from his own ambition and fluency. But in any group of interesting poets homogeneity is only skin deep.

New Poems 1956, the fifth of the annual P.E.N. anthologies, is frankly eclectic, aiming at

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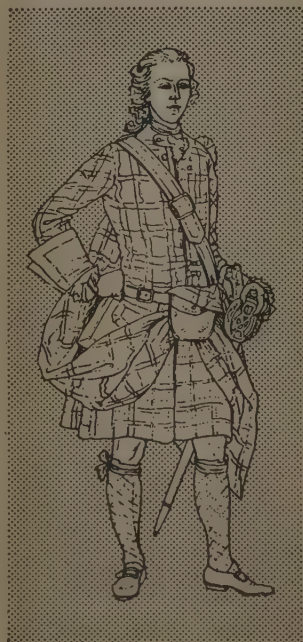


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representativeness rather than definition. It has however been compiled in a curious manner. Out of 10,000 poems submitted to them (presumably in response to the usual published invitation) the editors chose 'perhaps a dozen'. The rest of their book they either reprinted from periodicals or solicited direct from individual poets (judging from the introduction, the latter method accounted for fewer poems than the former). This suggests (among other things) that too much poetry is being written to be absorbed into print through the usual channels, or that the channels themselves are becoming blocked and inadequate. It also suggests (and this is confirmed by *New Lines*) that the same poems tend to get printed over and over again. This, while nice for the poets concerned, is not necessary, and reduces the chances of the untied. The editors have of course found some good things, particularly three superb de la Mares, of which 'This is the End' is the most moving:

No—no. Why further should we roam?
Since every road man journeys by
Ends on a hillside far from home
Under an alien sky.

This has the ancient and eternal authenticity, also to be found in some of MacNeice's 'Visitations' and, no doubt, if one can penetrate its various disguises, in some of the poems by younger writers here assembled. The student of literary trends may also amuse himself by comparing Stephen Spender's poem 'Remembering the Thirties' with the poem of the same name by Donald Davie in *New Lines*.

The Decline of American Liberalism

By Arthur A. Ekirch, Jr.

Longmans. 42s.

Conservatism in America

By Clinton Rossiter. Heinemann. 21s.

In contrast to the confident and buoyant tone of most American historical writing, which depicts the history of the United States as a steady advance towards individual freedom, Professor Ekirch here presents an unrelievedly pessimistic interpretation. To him the major trend in American history since the Revolution has been the gradual and cumulative decline of liberalism with, consequently, a substantial loss of individual liberty. That this decline has not been more generally appreciated is due, Professor Ekirch thinks, to present-day confusion about what liberalism really stands for. In recent years, the term has become associated with progressive movements of all kinds, whether aiming at economic reform or the establishment of civil rights. Yet, by their frank advocacy of collectivism as a means of achieving these ends, the progressive-liberals, Professor Ekirch contends, have repudiated one of the cardinal tenets of classic liberalism, namely, its insistence on the limited nature of government. Similarly, in their anxiety to promote equality of opportunity and to achieve social and national security, the progressives have largely forsaken that tolerance of minority opinion which marked the liberalism of the eighteenth century. In short, it is argued that modern American liberalism is a distorted and opportunistic philosophy having little in common with the ideals which found expression in the Declaration of Independence.

It is to these ideals that Professor Ekirch looks for a valid definition of liberalism and, thus quipped, he proceeds to chart its decline. The result of his analysis is that the orthodox interpretation of American history is challenged at a number of important points. Thus, the movement to form a new Constitution in 1787 is seen as the first step towards that centralisation of control which was the very negation of the Jeffersonian concept of freedom. Similarly,

Jacksonian democracy, for all its economic liberalism, made further inroads into individual liberty by its sanctification of the principle of majority rule. The Civil War, though freeing the slave, was in almost every other respect a setback for traditional liberalism because of the impetus it gave to the idea of a centralised and unlimited state. Finally, Professor Ekirch concludes, the continuance of this trend from 1865 to the present has meant that traditional liberal values have now been all but engulfed.

This striking survey, casting a baleful light on the whole course of American development, cannot fail to stimulate discussion and even controversy. It could be contended, for instance, that Professor Ekirch exaggerates the extent to which liberal ideals were realised in practice in the eighteenth century. Was a truly individual existence possible even then for anyone but the privileged few? At the other end of the time-scale, the current eclipse of McCarthyism would suggest that the liberal tradition in America is stronger than Professor Ekirch believes. Furthermore, the precise and somewhat doctrinaire definition of liberalism which he adopts prevents him from acknowledging the strength of the progressive argument that some form of collectivism was inevitable if liberalism was to survive at all in an industrialised and urbanised society.

Nostalgia for a largely non-existent past finds no place, however, in Professor Rossiter's stimulating study of American conservatism. Convinced that a high-minded conservatism is at present America's most urgent need, Professor Rossiter has addressed himself chiefly to those Americans who regard themselves as liberals but who are, in his view, unconscious conservatives. After tracing briefly the fortunes of American conservatism since 1607, he goes on to analyse and explain the recent swing to the right in American politics and culture, and concludes by outlining the principles that ought, in his opinion, to govern American conservative thinking and practice in the future. Professor Rossiter recognises that conservatism of a European kind has no place in America; that to succeed in American conditions it must be 'a discriminating revival of Adams, Calhoun, and the conservative Lincoln, not a wholesale importation of Burke and de Maistre'. Yet for all its realism on this and other points, Professor Rossiter's book cannot entirely discard a certain air of unreality. As he himself emphasises, the new conservatism cannot flourish unless it appeals to the leaders of American business. It is on this point, however, that misgivings are bound to arise, for even if American businessmen can overcome their chronic anti-intellectualism, it is surely the case that very few of them can afford the luxury of *noblesse oblige*. And even if this were not so, it is difficult to see how a fixed aristocracy could be reconciled with that fluid social order which has been such an essential ingredient of the American way of life.

Insect Communities. By Harold Bastin.

Hutchinson. 15s.

Insect behaviour is controlled by 'blind instinct', that innate tendency to certain stereotyped reactions that occur in response to appropriate stimuli whether external or internal. There is no evidence to bolster up the popular belief that social insects have any intelligence or reasoning powers. Each generation inherits 'an automatic nervous mechanism that may be compared with an elaborate piece of clockwork wound up and ready to perform its destined movements as soon as a spring is released'. The author suggests that all this has been produced by natural selection acting upon the basic tendency of insects to combine for mutual protection or when migrating in search of food.

The social activities of insects are brought to

their highest development in the ants, bees, wasps, and termites, and the main part of this book is concerned with those insects. The introductory chapters deal with such matters as the social caterpillars of butterflies and moths, and the communities of swarming locusts—insects in which the beginnings of the highly organised social structures found particularly among the Hymenoptera may be traced.

Mr. Bastin's book, which contains a section of excellent photographic plates, gives a very full account of all that is known about insect communities and their organisation. The most highly specialised communities provide frightening examples of the ultimate development of the totalitarian welfare state, in which the vast majority of the members are sexless slaves working themselves to death in order to perpetuate the system from which none of its constituents appears to derive any pleasure or satisfaction—it is social service gone mad.

Nevertheless the study of these communities is a fascinating occupation, and the more one learns of the subject the harder it is to remain convinced that all this feverish activity and marvellously co-ordinated organisation leads nowhere—that it represents a wrong turning taken in the process of evolution, and that it is a blind end that leads to nothing but futility. No one has yet shown, however, that it leads to anything else.

Aristocratic Society in Ancient Crete

By R. F. Willetts.

Routledge and Kegan Paul. 28s.

Aristophanes, The Knights. Translated into English rhyming verse by Gilbert Murray.

Allen and Unwin. 8s. 6d.

In antiquity the Cretans had a bad name as liars, mercenaries, and bowmen—to the ancients skill in archery always savoured a little of cowardice. Yet the brilliance of Minoan civilisation had shown what could be done with Crete's economic and human resources, and even in the classical age the constitutional stability of the Cretan city-states excited the interest and admiration of political theorists. Mr. Willetts painstakingly collects and interprets the rather exiguous literary sources, and the more copious but more difficult epigraphical evidence, in which the code of Gortyna is much the most extensive and informative item. From these elements he skillfully reconstructs the picture of a rigidly aristocratic social and political order imposed and maintained essentially unaltered for some 800 years by a conquering minority which broadened its basis and opened its ranks too little and too late. In fact the stability which appealed to Plato and Aristotle was the stability of a deep freeze. It is natural to think of Sparta in the same context; but Sparta, as part of mainland Greece, could never seal herself off from outside influence as completely as the Cretans seem to have done, nor was she ever free from the threat of revolt among her subject helots—it would be interesting to know why the Cretans seem apparently never rebelled.

In the majority of Greek states aristocracy of birth was challenged socially and economically by the new mercantile aristocracy of wealth, and was overthrown politically by the tyrants. The dark age of Greek history associated with the rise of the city-state and an aristocratic form of government was prolonged in Crete into a night with no promise of dawn. Mr. Willetts' reconstruction is sombre enough: but he handles his retractable material with resource and insight, and it is valuable to be reminded that 'Greek civilisation was a unity comprising many uneven levels of development', and that some

of the Greeks made only half-hearted efforts to scale the heights.

Dr. Gilbert Murray translates with his customary freshness, felicity, sparkle, and wit, and reminds us once again that he has learnt from the Greeks the solution to one of their deepest secrets—how to remain young in mind and heart with the passing of the years. If, for all his

accomplishment, much of the original is lost, this is because Aristophanes is one of the least translatable of authors, with a frothy exuberance of language, an unparalleled metrical virtuosity, and a capacity for soaring without warning to exquisite lyricism or plunging unpredictably into bathos and bawdry. His almost feverish excitement and intensity of emotion and imagination

mean that his genius is constantly threatening to destroy the coherence of his plots and characters, and an English version is of necessity subdued, emasculated, and bowdlerised. It is a tribute to Dr. Murray's long discipline as a translator, to his sensibility, and to his mastery of Greek and English that so much of Aristophanes survives.

New Novels

Giant's Arrow. By Anthony Rye. Gollancz. 12s. 6d.

All Honourable Men. By David Karp. Gollancz. 15s.

Freedom and Death. By Nikos Kazantzakis. Faber, for Bruno Cassirer. 18s.

'CRITICISM', writes Mme. Claude-Edmonde Magny, 'is nothing more or less than the serious-minded reader considering a work of literature not as a passing distraction but as the self-witness, the marks, the traces left behind him by a writer, as Empedocles is said to have left his sandals behind him on the brink of Etna before flinging himself headlong into a last adventure'. And one could suppose that everything a writer attempts is felt by him as having the importance and finality of a last throw. 'But', she goes on, 'this serious reader has to recognise also that he is under compulsion not to surrender his own bias, his own prejudices; that he must rather apply to letters what Baudelaire said of painting: *Pour être juste la critique doit être partielle, passionnée, politique*'. Which, while no doubt including the qualification that our '*partialité*' or our '*politique*' is always liable to change, makes the reading as the writing of a book both a form of self-interpretation and the interpretation of life in general. One seeks, in short, to agree or disagree with the writer's palette, the colouring of his mind, his focus, his view of things, his theme. The trouble sometimes is to decide what his focus, colouring, palette, or theme really is.

Theoretically Mr. Anthony Rye's theme is that children are, in the words of the Psalms, like arrows in the hand of the mighty man, and blessed is he who has his quiver full of them. But the complications of the story overlay this idea so effectively that if it were not for the title and the epigraph nobody could guess that it is the theme, or even one theme, of the novel.

Kelly, part-owner with his sister Bridget of an instruments factory, takes in Devere, a bright, shallow, crude, ambitious, ruthless man, as a new partner. The main plot seems to concern Devere's intrigues to get hold of the firm and oust Kelly. Then in comes Susan, Kelly's secretary, a rather brassy career-girl, who hates Devere and is hated by him. Devere seduces her in a semi-drunken moment. Here we have to cope with Bridget, whom Devere is successfully winding about his finger as a pawn in his intrigues against her brother; and with Carol, Devere's pretty but barren wife, who adores her husband and serves and abets him like a gangster's moll. Furthermore, Bridget, like her brother, is a Catholic, so that having physically seduced one woman Devere has to seduce another mentally or spiritually. Behind all this lie the religious troubles of Kelly: for his only child is an idiot hidden away in an institution run by nuns; his wife Naomi loathes the very thought of the child and will not have her in her home; and Kelly's father confessor keeps telling him that it is his moral duty to force Naomi to receive, love, and rear her idiot daughter. In the end Naomi does take her daughter home; Kelly yields his business to Devere; Devere's loving wife commits suicide, and he marries Susan. Bridget

looks on rather goofily, the odd woman out.

Clearly, or so it seems to this reader, we have here not one theme but a confusing welter of themes. All one can hope to take away from so complicated a drama (and the novel, largely written in dialogue, reads as if it had been conceived as a stage-drama) is the author's general attitude to life, the general coloration of his mind. This has eluded me simply because it is like the plot, cluttered, muddy, and confused. In short, I feel Mr. Rye is trying to make a serious point—but *what* point? That good men like Kelly really do win out in the end because spiritual happiness is more valuable than success? That the chase after success must inevitably end in spiritual ruin? That the love of children (as seen in Devere's sudden decision to abandon his barren wife for his pregnant mistress) is one of the most powerful instincts in life, far more powerful than man-woman love? Or is there some other theme which has escaped me? Nevertheless, one has the feeling that one day Mr. Rye will clarify his present obscurities. Meanwhile, one cannot but hail a young writer with the courage to face the perplexities of modern life, even if, so far, he can only make confusion worse confounded. An unusually interesting pair of Empedoclean sandals.

Not so with Mr. David Karp. But if I have to testify that his sandals are a very heavy pair of solid, American hunting-boots, that need not deter the reader. On the contrary he may be assured that he will march the whole way with Mr. Karp in total comfort and security, and warned that if he should begin to read this gripping yarn in bed he is not likely to put out the light until he has finished it. It concerns one Dr. Milo Dexter Burney, a public figure for many years, a famous fighter for liberal ideals, a born organiser, and something of what Americans call, a little derisively but always admiringly, a 'smart operator'. Invited by some wealthy conservatives to start an institute for the examination and dissemination of conservative ideals Burney is so blank-blank liberal that he decides that, in the interests of truth and social-research, he must do it. (This is, of course, totally unpalatable.) That we guess the rest does not prevent us from watching his gradual defeat with a horrified and excited fascination. The rest of this long fable revolves about a poor little professor who had once been associated indirectly, through his family, with a communist group and whom Burney persuades to apply for a post in his institute. The wealthy donors of the institute start to McCarthyise the unfortunate professor. Burney fails to save him, or his relatives. In the end we are to foresee Burney going out into the wilderness to fight openly and recklessly for liberalism.

Let's give Locke and Van Ord and Sutton the kind of public exposure they've been demanding for others! Let's strip these swine down to their proper size and color and hold them up for

inspection! Let's really get at these men to show the whole wide world how poisonously and dangerously vicious such thinking and thinkers are...

It is all far too melodramatic and simple-minded, and McCarthyism in America or anywhere else is not to be exploded by either melodrama or simple-mindedness, as has been pointed out over and over again by hard-thinking Americans. However, this does not prevent *All Honourable Men* from being as exciting as a thriller; and if, on higher ground, it sets people to think after the effect of the gin has cooled off we may all be grateful to Mr. Karp as a first-rate propagandist for freedom of thought and speech.

The sandals of Nikos Kazantzakis look impressive, but before I give my own opinion about them I owe it to him and to the reader to quote from the jacket: Albert Schweitzer writes: 'Since I was a young boy no author has made such a deep impression on me as Kazantzakis'. Thomas Mann wrote: '*Christ Recrucified* is without doubt a work of high artistic order, formed by a tender and firm hand and built up with strong dynamic power'. And there are enthusiastic tributes from other critics to his fire, zest, genius, vigour, philosophical and poetic feeling and grand manner. Here, at random, is the grand manner:

The storm had broken. The sky fell. Megalokastro seemed to rise and become part of it. The falling water flooded the streets and the world grew dark. Everywhere lightning played about the minarets, and down below, in Broad Street Captain Michales' face flared harsh and undisguised as he rode home. The mare's broad, white chest glittered with wet.

The scene is Crete (the author is a Cretan); the general subject is the resistance of the Christian inhabitants to Turkish rule, and the period seems to be the eighteen-nineties. The whole book flames from end to end with wild passions which do indeed communicate a strange and disturbing excitement, some of it sexual in origin, some political, making one wonder if all Cretans are always as palpitating and tooth-bare as this, as dramatic and as Byronic. ("Treacherous world, farewell", he whispered. He pulled from his sash the black-hilted knife, raised high in the air, and with all the strength that remained to him plunged it into his heart.") But it does weary in the end and much of it sounds amazingly like old-fashioned grand opera, so the while I yield that others may find here a savage and noble beauty from a vanished time my own thought is that

... thou art come too late, Empedocles,
And the world hath the day, and must break thee
Not thou the world

and turning from the stage-property sandal on the burnt soil wend my way down to the safe if slight charms of frankly theatrical Taormina.

SEÁN O'FAOLÁIN

CRITIC ON THE HEARTH

Weekly comments on B.B.C. programmes by independent contributors

Television Broadcasting

DOCUMENTARY

Give and Take

AMONGST ALL the skirling pipes, trumpeters on the imparts, and plumed troops of a massed week, now unexpected, exhilarating, and altogether pleasant to meet Dame Edith Sitwell in 'Highlight'. The poet appeared from Edinburgh where she had been performing 'Façade'. 'I rather that when "Façade" was first performed was badly received', said the interviewer (in London). 'Have you', came the reply, 'ever performed before an audience of low-grade mental defectives?' 'A difficult question to ask me, Dame Edith', returned Liff Michelmores.

But the audience in question, you and me, the tolerant viewers today, we are not kinsmen in any sense to the philistines (now dated the very word) of long ago who howled at modern verse in the Aeolian Hall. Our response is not one of any active kind at all. How would you describe us? Grumblers with an immense capacity for indifference. Chaps whose long suit is give and take. Given a good picture, we will like, and are sometimes given, anything. Watching documentary programmes regularly, you realise how few make at the outset any serious bid for the attention; rather fatally they sume your attention.

'Report from Africa', first part of an American survey made for the Columbia Broadcasting 'See It Now' series by Mr. Ed. Murrow and Mr. Fred Friendly and their team, showed what happens when this assumption is not made. The programme, which in just under one hour covered the Gold Coast, Kenya, Liberia, South Africa, and Rhodesia, seized with quick and biting effectiveness on some of the main problems of the continent. Shots of tribal meetings and African leaders sprang out at one with a precise and surprising rightness. Each made a point. That Liberia has 'the most formal capital in Europe' is a bare negligible fact until you see on the screen long, grim, unforgettable processions of Liberians in grey Ascot top-hats and morning suits. In Kenya there was a statement by Sir Evelyn Baring, an interview with the Minister of Agriculture on a tour of farms, and the spectacle of former Mau Mau men making confession: each told one more than mere words could. In South Africa, the film showed Father Buddleston's farewell to his flock, and also caught some Coloured people under the critical press of knowing that they had just been 'reclassified'. No programme has ever before taken a whole continent in its stride, but this production showed that the resources of television are capable of rising to such a theme.

From Africa we have been whirling round the world with Puck-like speed: if not actually to Asia at least to Asian Club. Most people I know who are on the whole averse to question-

and-answer programmes still enjoy the club as much as I do, and I've been trying to think what the attraction is, exactly. Kushwant Singh handles it awfully well from the chair, straining at the leash of judicial impersonality so hard at times that he finally lets go and rounds upon the speaker with a point himself; and then the members have the knack of choosing fascinating guests: Kenneth More a little while ago saying how it felt acting a living person, and this time Miss G. M. Godden, Matron of Hammersmith Hospital. Do Asian girls make good nurses?



'Asian Club', with Kushwant Singh as chairman, on August 24: the guest was Miss G. M. Godden, Matron of Hammersmith Hospital

Questions of this order were thrown out to the speaker who took them up most eloquently. Brief, sneaking snatches of people listening are really meaningful in this company, not the usual embarrassed grin or scalp-scratching boredom, but watchful, grave, attentive faces, eyes fixed as if something vital were at stake.

But, by and large, there's not been much time for discussion, even the Brains Trust relaxing this week under Mr. Malcolm Muggeridge's careful steering. It has been instead a time of shrilling whistles and shouted commands with programmes flooding in from the Radio Show at Earls Court and the Edinburgh Festival. These relays have all gone admirably: no apparent hitch. Of all the many martial sights, the tattoo from the castle in Edinburgh was certainly the most magnificent. Searchlit battlements gleamed in the distance with below the massed bands and troops moving about the esplanade in perfect harmony as if controlled by a single will. One also gets a dazzlingly clear picture from Earls Court, where there has been a grand international jamboree, 'Nato Night', with Napoleonic uniforms clashing with the overalls of slick, jeep-assembly teams, and also many energetic and disciplined youngsters in 'Youth Presents' doing musical pony rides and obstacle races in wheelbarrows.

Nor have the Scottish highlands and the Welsh mountains been unscaled by the cameras: the film of the royal tour of the Western Isles

showed some magnificent Hebridean vistas as well as a lot of rain in Oban, and another film in Children's Television, 'Crofter's Boy', gave a closer impression of what life is actually like in these friendly isolated places: so most vividly did Chataway's visit to Snowdonia in the third 'Away From It All', where he not only came to the conclusion that it was possible for a townsman to make a success of sheep-farming on the mountain slopes but actually discovered two who had done so. Yet another aspect of Wales came up in a visit by Clough Williams-Ellis and Wynford Vaughan Thomas to Castell Coch (the Red Castle), in Glamorgan, to reveal the robust Victorian thoroughness with which the scholarly Burgess restored it as a fortress of the Middle Ages. Harp and lute were brought in for jollity, and Alan Ladd on a palfrey to add a touch of derring-do. How medieval can you get?

ANTHONY CURTIS

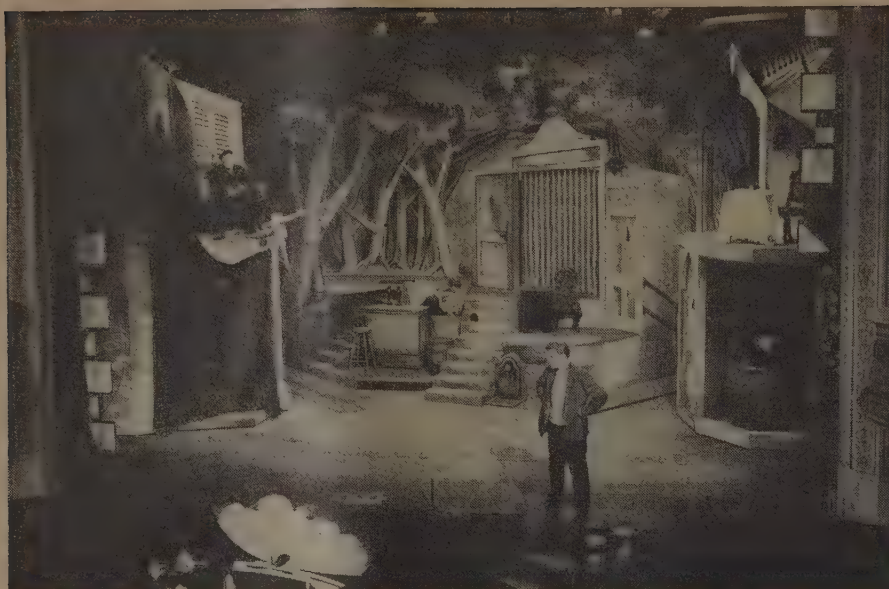
DRAMA

All Twitch Together

THESE ARE the weeks of the diaspora, the festive dispersal when Lime Grove goes to Earls Court and Fleet Street goes to Edinburgh, and unheralded, unloved, unsung Roger and Abigail go to their long home (and we don't mean Kensington Square this time). You might suppose we should be all out of touch with each other. But this is to reckon without modern means of communication—not trains and telephones and such antiquated things but the wonderful power to take in each other's television programmes, like washing. Thus, in Edinburgh a knot of Scots bound for the granite heights of the castle Esplanade, where nightly the Festival Tattoo draws the crowds, gathers before a window in which a television set displays a kilted band marching and counter marching. 'It's the Tattoo!' cry some. Others better informed, riposte: 'It's Earls Court', and



Joyce Grenfell (right) with Daphne Oxenford in 'Joyce Grenfell Requests the Pleasure' on August 24



Scene from 'Under Milk Wood', part of which was televised from the Edinburgh Festival on August 20. Standing, centre, is Donald Houston as the narrator; the other characters are: Denys Graham (foreground) as Nogood Boyo, William Squire as Captain Cat, Peter Halliday (background) as Sinbad Sailors, and T. H. Evans (extreme right) as the Rev. Eli Jenkins

they roll the 'R' exotically, making it sound as far away and fey as Zanzibar or Trebizond. Meanwhile, no doubt, little gatherings in Edgware Road bound for the cinema queue pause and observe a similar twitching window-display. 'It's Earls Court', some will say: others correct them: 'No, it's the Tattoo from Edinburgh'.

There has been a lot of fun from the Radio Show, and the B.B.C.'s sterling effort to see the funny side of itself was commendable in the revue. The important broadcast from Scotland, however, was, in my view, 'Under Milk Wood', which has been put on the stage as the *pièce de résistance* of the theatrical side of the big northern jamboree. Tuesday's was, of course, only an excerpt and was perfectly enjoyable in its own right. Further, I suppose one ought to postpone final judgement until we have seen not a televised stage production from a theatre (with an invited audience) but a real, first and foremost television production. Nevertheless, I believe a sharp lesson is to be learned; *videlicet*, that this radio picture—of a Welsh village with the lid off—has been spoiled by being translated into terms of sight and sound. It was like picking up some beloved book which one has always visualised since childhood in a certain way and then finding that this new edition of it is interleaved with a professional illustrator's notions of the people and places concerned.

In this column it should be my care to stress the fact that the addition of vision always improves the situation. That the singer Mme. X, for instance, of the divine top register and not so comely lower jaw is in some way more real to us when we can see her—larynx and all: that the surf racing over the sand is more effective in summoning sea fever than the well-worn effects record of the sea-gull. Of course, Dylan Thomas' piece is so sumptuously rich—the richest and funniest theatrical text since 'Juno

and the Paycock', perhaps—that a great deal of pleasure still creams through to us. When the impossible Polly Garter (Diana Maddox) says 'Nothing grows in our garden, only washing . . . And babies. Isn't life a terrible thing, thank God?'; or when Mrs. Pugh says 'There ought to be a law' (against this same wanton); or when Captain Cat grieves for his dead darlings, or Mary Ann Sailors says she is eighty-five and is full of praise for the Lord and all His wondrous ways—then indeed to be shown the speaker is no hindrance, merely a redundancy. But there are places, as those who try to put Dickens on the stage always discover, where very rich verbal description is somehow utterly spoiled by translation into terms of actual physical vision. Thomas' verbal picture of the village bachelor snoring abed with his boots neatly teamed together in the wash basin, or the policeman rising from bed at night are not patient of actual illustration; or again, Nogood Boyo's afternoon nap adrift in the

boat whence he sees the village rising up from the sea edge—well, they might gain a fraction from being illustrated, say, in terms of the cinema or the free-cutting television camera. But they cannot be improved on by a staging of them in terms of the neat, quick-change revue sketch, however lively.

John Whiting's 'Marching Song' on Sunday night was a different matter altogether. In the theatre the play's portentous and esoteric symbolism held the audience at arm's length. On television it worked more intensely, even though it still strikes me as wilfully inexplicit, like Ibsen at his most unhelpful. Fateful, modern, symbolic drama about a man fighting a rear-guard action against himself and coming to a crisis of a break with all romantic supports should grip our emotions more deeply. But the crumbling of illusions and the false starts of hope, like the stroking of a helmet on a plinth, are fascinating or baffling according to taste, but they are seldom directly affecting.

Is this a drama of Europe 'on the eve'? Royston Morley had little luck in producing. Patrick Barr (the General) and Faith Brook (as Catherine de Troyes, the mistress who is *de trop*) seemed unconvinced. Miranda Connell, as the escape route, and Ernest Thesiger, once again as the power politician, were admirable. But why does the defeated film man show a Betty Stockfield film as his 'pre-war masterpiece'? This play made a success in Germany where the drama—all honour to it—thrives on cloudy parables about defeat. With a little Latin light let into it, such a tragedy about the point of no return should surely be the great play which Mr. Whiting will doubtless one day achieve. At least it is neither 'Godot' nor Jaberwocky, and B.B.C. television did well to promote it.

PHILIP HOPE-WALLACE

Sound Broadcasting

DRAMA

Franco-British

IT IS SOME TIME since a famous editor alarmed his staff by telephoning, late at night and on a very poor line, a long speech from a play by George Chapman. The speech fitted snugly into the current situation, and only the great man would have remembered it. His staff that night harassed and not in the mood for Jacobean tragedy, was unappreciative. Moreover, no one seemed to have a copy of the play on the premises, though the least likely people were tapped. (Surprising: everybody should have a pocket Chapman.) I remembered the confusion when years later, I met Chapman's 'Bussy d'Ambois' at a tiny club theatre and again on Sunday (Third). The verse seemed to flame in the air bearing out a critic's opinion the other day that this dramatist 'always strove to write above a mortal pitch'.

Possibly the ghost of Dryden was a glum listener. On reading 'Bussy' he exclaimed that when he had 'taken up what I supposed a false star, I found I had been cozened with a jelly'. His long clatter of invective was too loud even for a man used to formality and shock by Chapman's intricate extravagances. The play of Bussy's rise and fall swoops grandly upon the ear. One thinks of it in figure after figure from Chapman's text, a cedi beaten with continual storms, torch blown in the wind. (An



Patrick Barr as Rupert Forster and Faith Brook as Catherine de Troyes in 'Marching Song' on August 26

Shakespeare's Hotspur plucking bright honour from the pale-faced moon.) R. D. Smith, who made the radio script and produced, helped Dryden's ghost as much as he could. Chapman, like Puff, could be 'luxuriant', and Mr. Smith had removed the superfluities. The result was fiercely compelling, from a premonitory thunder-roll to the ultimate magnificence of rhetoric when Bussy d'Ambois, wounded mortally, stood until death had made him marble. It is an extraordinary piece. Although Chapman was writing of events at the Court of France less than thirty years earlier, the play had to have its supernatural accessories, with an obliging ghost. There is, too, a Senecan messenger to report Bussy's fight. 'Relate at large what thou hast seen and heard', says the King in effect, settling himself back. And what messenger ever failed to respond to such an invitation as this?

The play, in its stripped form, allowed Anthony Jacobs to hurtle at Bussy with all his force. It is an immensely virile part. Unless the actor has staying-power he is beaten early: it appears to be a mile race run often at the speed of a sprint. We can trust Mr. Jacobs to stay any course: when he pelts into a tangle of rhetoric we know that he will emerge unscratched. This Bussy, as apt with philosophy as with a gasconade, bound the night together. Mr. Jacobs was plausibly the King's 'eagle', even if we had to take personal magnetism for granted. Vocally, this actor was born not to charm but to command.

Most of the cast, especially Laidman Browne in the messenger speech and Oliver Burt as the King, helped to light the torrid caverns of Chapman's imagination. But I did regret too frequently—and especially in early passages for Tamyra—those self-conscious mannerisms of the blank-verse speaker that must always thrust us back, with a shock, to studio and microphone.

Again Paris. 'On such a wonderful night', says someone in 'Nekrassov' (Third), 'a man-hunt should be pleasure'. I rose from my vigil with these characters of Jean-Paul Sartre, feeling that the pleasure had been elusive, and wondering why in the world the piece had been called the best political comedy since Shaw. There is some transiently agreeable satire, and Sartre does knock splinters from a certain brand of newspaper. Its editor (the voice, here like an exasperated machine-gun, belonged to the admirable Mr. Jacobs), said it all when he proclaimed that, on a front page, the dangers of war must always increase. 'Reassuring' was not a word to be splashed: if people were to be reassured in advance, why should they buy the newspaper?

All right; but once the 'crook of the century' was masquerading as a Soviet Minister seeking asylum in the West, the play resembled a mechanical toy that ceases to astonish after its first few moves. (The ghost of Pirandello might have looked in towards the end.) Donald McWhinnie—who adapted and produced—and his cast had worked intensively; among others, Maurice Denham, Richard Goolden, and Valerie White acted with flexible resource. But always I was too conscious of the machinery: M. Sartre had given us the works, but he might have covered them up more adroitly.

I duly reached 'Floggit's' (Light) and found myself up a tree. Gert and Daisy were worrying about a tree in their garden: it was, though I may have got this wrong, part of the English heritage. Three script-writers had worked upon the episode without devising anything radio-tenic. Still we can be sure that, presently, Gert and Daisy will rise above their material. Of all artists, they will not let their listeners be sozzled with a jelly (if Dryden's ghost will permit the intrusion).

J. C. TREWIN

THE SPOKEN WORD

Other Views

IN THREE PROGRAMMES last week we were given the opportunity to see ourselves as others see us. We British pride ourselves on our eagerness to receive with imperturbable good humour the frank opinions of foreigners on ourselves, our country, our social institutions, in short, on everything to do with us—a quality which we ascribe to the virtue of toleration. Certain foreigners, however, diagnose it otherwise. We are so convinced of our own superiority, they tell us, that we are unable to take the views of outsiders seriously; we welcome them simply because we find them amusing. If this is so, then the effect of two of these programmes will merely have confirmed us in our self-conceit.

'Through African Eyes' was a lively report broadcast by six members of the Nigerian Broadcasting Service and one, a Kikuyu, of the African Broadcasting Service in Kenya of their recent visit of four days to the King Edward VI Grammar School for Boys at Louth, Lincolnshire, where Tennyson was a schoolboy from 1816 to 1820. The visitors were young men, and most of them had been schoolmasters. They were allowed to mix freely with the boys and staff, to invade classrooms during school hours if so disposed, and were even invited by some of the masters to take over their classes. One of them made recordings of talks with masters and boys, various school noises, and even (watched by an inquisitive duck) of the celebrated chatter of Tennyson's 'Brook'. It was a delightful broadcast, but those who expected criticism of us English and our ways drew a blank. The impression left was that both hosts and visitors were the jolliest, friendliest, most easy-going people in the world, members of a single family.

'A Passage to England' is a series of four socratic dialogues, of which last Thursday's 'Now that April's There' was the first. They were written by Nirad C. Chaudhuri, whose book, *Autobiography of an Unknown Indian*, appeared five years ago. It gave the writer's impressions of England drawn from his reading of English literature. Last year the B.B.C.'s Overseas Service invited him to England to see for himself and compare the two impressions. The author and his two sons, who were the speakers in the dialogue, were impersonated by Hugh Griffith, Basil Jones, and Richard Bebb, who spoke with rich Welsh accents. At first I found the accent put me out of focus. But not for long. Welsh speech has something in common with the English speech of some Indians, and I accepted the device as legitimate and ingenious. The picture of England showed us much that we had consciously realised and so enhanced our awareness of our own country. Mr. Chaudhuri's appreciative impressions, in fact, reinforced our incorrigible complacency.

Fortunately, 'On the Inside Looking Out' did much to right the balance, though the speaker, John Freeman, was British. He has recently visited Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary, and brought home much interesting and valuable information about the attitude of intelligent people in those countries towards us of the West which our Government would be well advised to take to heart. Mr. Freeman speaks with knowledge and authority and I found his talk both absorbingly interesting and exasperating—exasperating because it seems that we are ignoring urgent opportunities and duties in these countries.

I listened with unflagging excitement the week before last to the Grand Finale of 'What Do You Know?' in which Antony Carr for Wales, still in his late teens, knocked spots off the English and Scottish representatives, although one of them was a schoolmaster. Out of about sixty questions—and they were tough ones—

their respective scores were 20, 13, and 10. I competed silently and tied with the Englishman. Last week Antony Carr met the champions of the two previous years and scored more than the combined efforts of his two opponents. I came in one mark short of the runner-up. I have always believed myself to be outstandingly bad at General Knowledge; these results seem to imply I am just plain insignificant average.

In 'All in the Day's Work' during recent weeks Audrey Russell has been providing a very agreeable quarter of an hour at 1.40 on Tuesdays. She talks, like the Walrus and the Carpenter, of many things, in fact you never know what she will talk about next.

MARTIN ARMSTRONG

MUSIC

Edinburgh: Concerts

THE EDINBURGH FESTIVAL has in past years too often begun with some too mildly ordinary programme, 'not with a bang but a whimper'. This year, the tenth in the series, has had a royal and majestic send-off. It was, I understand, to have been more solemn still but for a sectarian prejudice that forbade the singing of the Latin mass on a Sunday in the presence of the Head of the Church of Scotland. A pity, for nothing could have been more apt to the moment than Beethoven's prayer for peace with its warning background of thundering guns.

We had instead the Ninth Symphony played by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra under the direction of Sir Thomas Beecham, who, in his other capacity as Sir Oracle, politely informed the city and the world that 'festivals are bunk'. Though he was ready to debunk the Festival, he remained while on the rostrum a responsible musician. His reading of the Ninth Symphony was individual and, at points, questionable, but it was, like most of Beecham's performances at first-hand, the result of the impact upon the music of a lively and original mind that is not prepared to accept established judgements. So a new light, a softer radiance than usual, was shed upon the masterpiece.

Although, while they were in progress, the tempi of the first two movements seemed too leisurely—indeed, the first at times sounded muscle-bound—by the time that the finale had got under way, one perceived that the conductor had taken as his motto *Respicere finem*. Nothing was to anticipate or detract from the splendour of the choral movement, to which all else must lead with an air of inevitability. He even linked together, by making not a beat's pause between them, the slow movement and the finale, as though Beethoven had written *attacca*—a procedure justified by bringing out the relationship between the fanfare-like passage near the end of the *Adagio* and the opening of the *Presto*.

This opening of the finale was splendidly done. The 'recitatives' of the lower strings were moulded into vocal shapes so that one could almost hear the words. And when the time came for the great melody to appear, it seemed to be fashioned before our ears out of vague forms that gradually took firm shape until the beauty of it was revealed by the full orchestra. And still something was held in reserve for the choral entry, the Edinburgh Royal Choral Union, no less than the quartet of distinguished soloists, responding magnificently to the demands of the music. The choir, whom an access of loyal fervour had carried out of time in the National Anthem, sang steadily and accurately, surmounting the formidable difficulties which test the altos and basses no less than the sopranos and tenors.

At the second concert Beecham gave a characteristically genial performance of Brahms' Second Symphony, which, one fancies, is his

favourite of the four, and on Thursday evening, besides providing a finely wrought accompaniment to Casadesu's beautiful performance of Beethoven's Concerto in G, gave one of his marvellous exhibitions of the art of making third-rate music sound enchanting. Before Brahms' symphony Sir Arthur Bliss conducted performances of an occasional Overture composed for the Festival and his Violin Concerto of which Campoli once more gave a brilliant account.

As a visiting composer, Bliss has shared the limelight with the veteran Dohnányi, who anticipated a recital of his own piano music in Edinburgh with a broadcast in the Third Pro-

gramme, and also took part in a concert which included his 'Variations on a Nursery Song'. In addition, his chamber music is currently being set before us. The first String Quartet, excellently played by the Macgibbon Quartet, fairly exemplifies the composer's qualities—his seriousness which, as the 'Variations on a Nursery Song' show, can be lightened by humour, his fine craftsmanship, and his essential lack of a strong musical individuality. His music is often eloquent, but never really original. It is difficult to believe that the composer of 'Ruralia Hungarica' was born only four years before his compatriot, Béla Bartók. But a great pianist he remains, and one would have liked to hear him

in some of the German classics, to whose world he belongs as the last epigone of Brahms. Still, Festival-goers had no cause for complaint, who could hear on Sunday afternoon the three last sonatas of Beethoven played with such magisterial authority and sustained eloquence by Dame Myra Hess.

Discussion of the operatic performances at the Festival must be deferred till next week. I will only observe here that I have heard many odd performances of our National Anthem, but never any so peculiar as that with which Herr Bittner and the Hamburg Orchestra favoured us on Saturday night.

DYNELEY HUSSEY

Schubert's Church Music

By MAURICE J. E. BROWN

A programme of Schubert's liturgical music, including the Mass in E flat, two Offertories, and the Magnificat, will be broadcast in the Third Programme at 8.0 p.m. on Friday, September 7

CREDO IN UNUM DEUM!—*Du nicht, dass weiss ich wohl, aber das wirst Du glauben, dass Tietze heute Abend Deine "Nachthelle" singen wird...*

This is the opening of a letter written to Schubert in 1827 by his young friend Ferdinand Walcher. There seems no point in baulking the plain implication of the words: 'I BELIEVE IN ONE GOD!—you don't, that I well know, but you will believe this, that Tietze is singing your "Nachthelle" this evening...'. Schubert's unorthodox beliefs were apparent in his earlier years, and his association with free-thinking students in Vienna had, if anything, intensified his views. It may be this unorthodoxy which vitiates his church music, and prevents it taking the last, clinching grip on the listener's admiration and attention.

There was no conscious revolt in Schubert's attitude; his attitude was the passive revolt of an uncomplicated nature, forced in childhood to undergo long stretches of liturgical boredom, the lot of the professional choirboy. He was incapable of the childlike faith of Bach or Beethoven—and certainly of Bruckner—and hence incapable of the unarguable, unanswerable sublimity of assertion in their sacred music.

Why, then, did Schubert compose so much church music? One can only point to the compelling need to establish his name and to sell his compositions, and to the fact that no worthwhile position in Vienna's imperial or city churches was open to a musician who was not a prolific composer of liturgical music.

Many of Schubert's church works were written for the Liechtental Church, the parish church of his boyhood and youth. Readers of his biographies, encountering the name of this church in the outskirts of Vienna, may have pictured it as a humble, suburban affair, not to be compared with the places of worship in the Inner City. This is far from being the truth. Although not large it is an exquisite example of the Viennese baroque church, light, spacious, glowing with colour and ornament, furnished with massive, painted altar-pieces and gilded candelabra. One stands there in the silence and calls to memory the strains of some of Schubert's youthful compositions for this church, the Mass in F major, for example, first performed here. At once they achieve their true significance. The picturesque, sensuous music is one with the baroque riot around us. Schubert's church music should be heard in Schubert's churches, or, at least, it should be considered in relation to the surroundings where he knew it would be heard. The glories of medieval and Renaissance liturgical music seem to demand the Gothic background, where the eye is led upward,

and still upward, to the 'high, embowed roof', where sound and sight are lost in a dimness which suggests the remoteness of heaven. In Vienna's baroque shrines the eye which looks upward has no need of imagination to help it: heaven and heaven's inhabitants are painted on the ceiling. Baroque is the art of the façade, and we should think of Schubert's church music as gracing that splendid ornamentation where saints and angels, haloed light and celestial trumpets, are not abstractions but placed before the worshipper in concrete representation.

In his music Schubert tries to give spirituality to the humanity of those figures. He does not always succeed. The Mass in E flat, written during the last year of his life, is full of a humanity which remains largely earthbound. The passage *Et incarnatus est* is a 'Lullaby of the Virgin', and an exquisite one; but it could suitably accompany any mother with a sleeping babe. The *Crucifixus* has some of Schubert's most dramatic pages. Yet the irregular rhythms and the unprecedented (in 1828) harmonic changes have a certain calculated quality such as we find more often in Berlioz; there is little of Schubert's inspired, improvisatory discoveries. The result is that we are given a picture of human suffering, with no suggestion that the text means anything more than that. But both passages are pure delight to the listener if he can forget the text and what other composers have done with it.

The fugal choruses in the E flat Mass are there, of course, because tradition demanded them and not because Schubert felt impelled to write them. To him, as to Beethoven, 'fugue' bore the same honourable but defunct status that 'sonata' does to musicians of today. The living, artistic forms of one century fascinate, but seldom inspire, the practitioners of the next. Schubert's fugues, like Beethoven's, fail as music, if they fail at all, and not as structures. The fine *Credo* of Schubert's E flat Mass concludes with one of his noblest pieces of choral fugue; listeners may like to compare the subject of this 'Cum Sancto Spiritu' with that of Bach's E major fugue in Book II of the '48'.

Schubert's so-called Second Offertory, a *Salve Regina* in F major (D.223), is a soprano solo with orchestral accompaniment which he composed for Therese Grob. The figure addressed by this streaming melody is an enthroned Queen of Heaven; to the worshippers in the church the music was her tribute. It is a young composer's work, the expression pure and ardent within its formal pattern.

Another short Offertory of the same year, 1815, is *Tres sunt*, composed for chorus and orchestra, with an organ continuo (D.181). The

words assert the dogma of the Trinity, but Schubert's setting, in A minor, is demure enough; he uses, rather self-consciously, the idiom of a bygone period, with conventional suspensions in the cadences, and achieves a pavan-like, measured music made interesting by contrasts of tone and dynamics.

In the year 1816 Schubert wrote a number of church works. Amongst the shorter compositions the finest is a *Magnificat* in C major, for solo voices, chorus, orchestra, and organ continuo (D.486). C major always promoted a certain epic style in Schubert, and it is not lacking in this setting of the famous canticle. It has a threefold structure. The opening *Allegro maestoso* is like a magnificent wall of sound; the sentences of the text are sung against a glittering façade of orchestral tone. Short interludes, substantially written, are useful foils to the choral passages and give an almost 'concerto' effect to the entries of the chorus. The verses commencing 'He hath holpen his servant Israel' are sung by a solo quartet; the music is a pastoral, F major movement, a welcome contrast to the flooding tone of the preceding section. Typically Schubertian modulations help on the progress of the music. The final *Gloria* is a triumphant burst of sound marked *allegro vivace*. With Schubert, *vivace* is always an indication of mood, not of tempo, and in this chorus one might suggest that too brisk a pace would spell disaster. In the music of the *Gloria* the attentive listener will catch one of those uncanny foreshadowings—they occur right through the body of Schubert's work—of the great C major Symphony. Here it is the coda of the Symphony's finale, the passage leading to the development section, which the *Gloria* anticipates.

The *Magnificat* is one of the few pieces of Schubert's church music for which there is no recorded first performance. But one knows where it should have been first performed. Vienna's Karlskirche is its physical and spiritual home. Against that superb interior the baroque ornamentation of Schubert's music would give, and be given, reciprocal splendour.

To mark the Third Programme's tenth anniversary, a performance of Beethoven's Mass in D will be given in the Royal Festival Hall on September 29 by the B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra, B.B.C. Chorus and Choral Society, under the direction of Otto Klemperer. Tickets are now available, and souvenir programmes, price 2s. 6d., will be obtainable from B.B.C. Publications, 35 Marylebone High Street, London, W.1, from September 22. Also ready is the prospectus of the 1956-57 season of B.B.C. Symphony Concerts at the Royal Festival Hall, starting on October 10.

Broadcast Suggestions for the Housewife

STORING BACON AND CHEESE

A LISTENER ASKS: 'Please tell me the correct way to keep bacon and cheese to prevent them getting either mouldy or dry'; and another: 'What is the best method of keeping cheese? My refrigerator always smells of it, but when I keep it in a plastic bag or box it gets moist and goes mouldy'.

If you have a refrigerator, wrap the bacon rashers completely round in greaseproof paper and put them in a covered dish. They will keep pliable as well as fresh for many days. If you have no refrigerator, put the bacon rashers—without wrapping paper—straight into a plastic bag. Fold it over to exclude as much air as possible and put it in a cool larder.

In my opinion, cheese is not one of the best foods to keep in a refrigerator. The exception is cream cheese; but for the rest the temperature is too cold: the cheese loses flavour: I use a plastic bag or aluminium foil not too tightly wrapped—leave a little air for the cheese to breathe—and keep the cheese in the larder. But it does soon go mouldy: there is such a large cut area to lose moisture. The solution would be to buy a large piece of cheese—at least two or three pounds of it—so it could retain the moisture and keep well. The alternative is to buy cheese 'little and often'.

The same listener who had difficulty with storing cheese put another question: 'What should be used to wash out a refrigerator when defrosting it?' You need nothing more than just plain warm water (rubbed on and wiped dry) so long as you do it once a week. If you do need anything stronger—if something has spilt and stuck before it could be wiped up—try a very mild alkali: one level tablespoon of

bicarbonate of soda dissolved in two quarts of warm water. Then rinse it off and wipe it dry. Do not use metal polish on the chromium-plated or anodised fittings—you never get rid of the smell: just wipe with a damp cloth, then a dry one.

As for the outside enamel, if you want a protective spotless finish to last with the minimum of trouble and the minimum of finger-prints try one of the new liquid silicone polishes now on the market.

'A hint, please', writes a listener, 'for keeping lettuce fresh over the weekend'. Slice off the root and any uneatable outer leaves; wash the lettuce; shake it; then put it—still a little wet—into a saucepan. Stand it in a cool place and put the lid on.

LOUISE DAVIES

'SINGING' CHIPS

Cut all your chips to about the same size—say, as thick as your index finger—and dry them carefully. Beef fat is the best to cook chips in, in my opinion, and you should have plenty of it in the frying pan. Warm the fat but do not make it too hot. Put in the chips and three-quarters cook them. They should not be brown. Take them out of the fat, and prepare the rest of the meal.

When you are ready to serve the chips, heat up the fat again until it begins to give off a blue smoke and then put in the chips. They begin to 'sing' and become golden in colour. After a few seconds take them out and put into a sieve and shake well. Put them on a dish and sprinkle with salt. You will find they are crisp on the outside and soft inside.

MARIE-JEANNE

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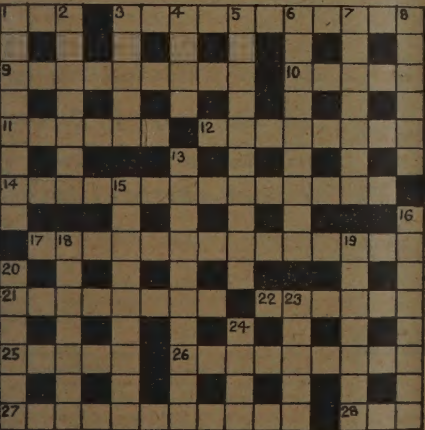
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Crossword No. 1,370. How's That? By Fitzjohn

Prizes (for the first three correct solutions opened): book tokens, value 30s., 21s., and 12s. 6d. respectively

Closing date: first post on Thursday, September 6. Entries should be on the printed diagram and envelopes containing them should be addressed to the Editor of THE LISTENER, Broadcasting House, London, W.1, marked 'Crossword' in the left-hand top corner. In all matters connected with the crosswords the Editor's decision is final



The decision in every appropriate case is 'not out'.

CLUES—ACROSS //

- 1. For The Listener I would fish (3)
- 9. In brief, a backward county, a border, or a merger (11)
- 9. It's the same throughout the year—always work in arrear, something for the printer (9)
- 10. Lunar month gives pacific message (5)
- 11. Nothing clear—far from clear (6)
- 12. Like Rose never to give us the stuff for the lamp (8)
- 14. Steal because of revolutionary conscience and get the bird (14)
- 17. Popular resort with former interior restored (14)
- 21. Scrutinise the minute for the implication (8)
- 22. Iron with debatable content (6)
- 25. A lido will give you wrong ideas (5)
- 26. 1 down (in full) serves for giving it (9)
- 27. Cardinal indication, possibly (11)
- 28. Easy, for instance, in a colloquial way (3)

DOWN

- 1. Inanimate object displaying intelligence (8)
- 2. Dear, dear! She's woolly and harmless (7)
- 3. Tartar from far Golconda (5)
- 4. A throne, but not the same (4)
- 5. The name of the beverage may be chromatically misleading (10)

- 6. Half a revolting tribe with only half a drum, yet magnificent (9)
- 7. They use teeth and are the aim of setters (7)
- 8. Strong all round, very likely, but not a Test batsman (6)
- 13. Very small, like the 1 in .01 (10, three words)
- 15. Dark horse's oppressive better half? (9)
- 16. Applied to an innings, good; to a Scot, ill-omened (8)
- 18. Take a remarkable fleet in Cheshire (7)
- 19. Who move in these circles? Brazilians, Mexicans or Picts, possibly (7)
- 20. Battle scene. Act I has the same ending as 6 (6)
- 23. Make it our man, bull-headed (5)
- 24. Sprung, perhaps, and claimed by me (4)

Solution of No. 1,368

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	0	2	0	3	3	5	5	7	3
11	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	1
12	0	0	2	2	7	1	1	1	1
13	0	1	1	3	1	2	1	2	2
14	1		1			3			3
15	4	1	2		1	0	1	5	1
16	6								0
17	2	1	0	1	0	2	5	0	5
18	8		0		0			0	0
19	1	0	1	7	1	0	4	2	8
20	9	1	1	7	1	1	7	0	2

Prizewinners: 1st prize: R. Trapp (Worcester); 2nd prize: F. H. Turner (Southwick); 3rd prize: H. H. George (Battle)

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